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OLD TIMES

BY

E. A. CREWSON



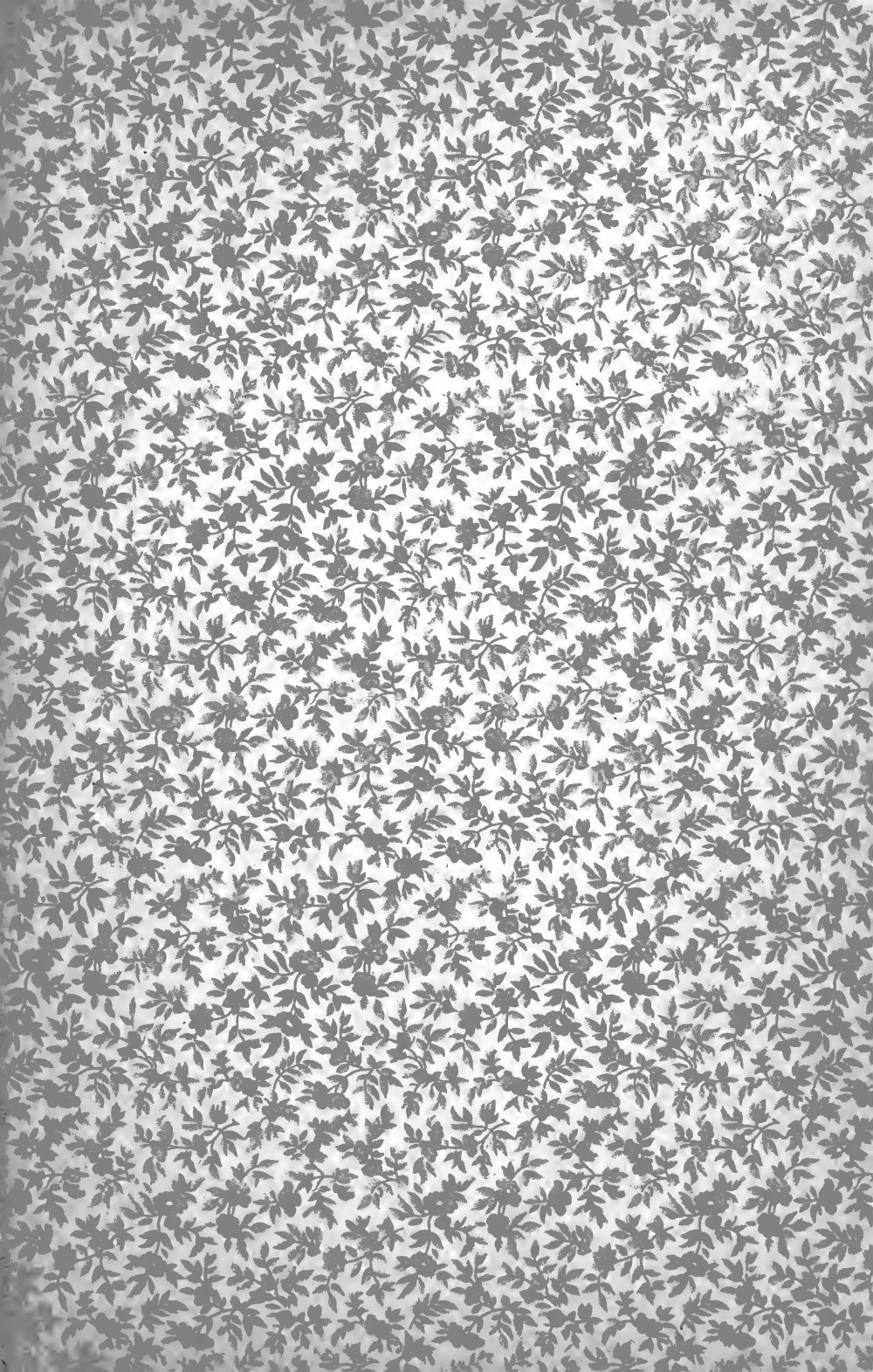
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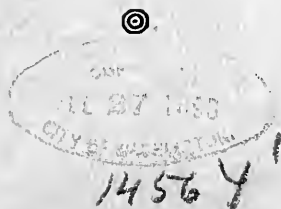




OLD TIMES

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

BY
W. A. Crewson
W. A. CREWSON



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1893.

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By E. A. CREWSON, VERSAILLES, MO.

1893.

THE OLD HICKORY WOOD FIRE.

AS I sit by the stove, all polished and nickeled,
Where a carpet of velvet covers the floor,
I reckon I ought to feel wonderfully tickled
While the wind thumps and bangs at the door;
Yes, ought to feel glad—so much to admire,
But it all will not cure a longing desire
A fellow will have for the old hickory fire;
With its curling and snapping,
And its whirling and lapping;
That good old fashioned hickory wood fire.

Their anthracite coal don't have any snap;
No bright burning flame up the flue rolls;
I can't help missing the sweet hickory sap
Frying out of the fore-stick over the coals;
These new fangled fires are all very well,
But one thing I miss, and its easy to tell:
'Tis the good old fashioned hickory wood smell;
That old rustic perfume
Which filled up the room;
That good old fashioned hickory wood smell.

How often we'd sit by that wide open fire,
The wild winds howling and roaring outside;
The bright hickory flames mounting up higher,
Beaming on "linsey-woolsey" close to our side.

Yes, thoughts of it oft' my memory will throng
As I dream how, with apples and cider and song,
We'd while away evenings that never seemed long;
 And when the fire burned low,
 How it would tell of the snow
In the old winter evenings that never seemed long.

You can take your coal and your natural gas,
 Which the tastes of to-day are made to desire;
The bright burnished stove in its nickel and brass,
 But give *me* the old fashioned hickory wood fire;
Where, with apples and walnuts, before it we'd sit,
While father would doze and mother would knit,
And the flames would snap and sparkle and spit;
 But the fire burned low
 In the long, long ago,
And the ashes of years lie forever on it.

THE EVENING BREEZE.

Soft and sweet, from whence it blows,
 Filled with the sweet perfume it brings,
How, or from whence, who knows?
 It seems like wind from angel's wings.
And as the night draws on apace,
 Stars look through where clouds are riven;
I feel the breezes fan my face,
 And seem nearer drawn to heaven.

ECHOES.

IT'S strange how often a sentence spoken—
May-be nearly a life-time ago—
Comes down through all the years unbroken,
Just why we really don't know.
For thousands of words long since said
Are numbered now with the memory's dead.
Then why, through all the years that's fled,
This sentence so sweet and low?

May-be it comes like a childish dream
From a play-ground loved so well;
Sometimes it comes, we catch but a gleam,
From where we can hardly tell.
Down through the mists over us rolled
These words come scented with flowers of old,
Worth, yes, a thousand times more than gold,
Though oft like a lingering knell.

May-be a whispered word with a golden ring,
A silent pledge forever keeping;
May-be a piece of song that we used to sing
O'er golden-haired baby sleeping.
Down through the calm and tempest blast
They drift to us from the shadowy past;
Whether of joy or sorrow the shadows cast
Come silently, softly creeping.

OLD BILLY MCKAY.

EVERYBODY knew old Billy McKay,
But no one ever remembered the day
When Billy first settled his place.
For years they had seen him grub and toil,
Piling up rocks and coaxing the soil,
When often it seemed the sun would boil
The skin on his wrinkled old face.
And all the people who passed that way
Would only just nod and merely say,
“How are you, Uncle Billy?” or, “How are you, McKay?”

His living was made by the hardest of knocks,
For the soil was thin that covered the rocks
Which often would stick clear out.
But fast the weeds and brush would grow,
And Billy would plow and dig and hoe,
And hunt his meat by tracks in the snow
With little hope but lots of doubt.
And little children would stop their play
And merely look up and point his way,
And laughing, remark, “There goes poor old Billy McKay!”

For years and years his mind was filled
With thoughts of the comfortable house he'd build,
While rags grew thick in the sash.

He patched the roof and mended the door
And propped up the sills under the floor
And begged for time at the country store,

For his pockets were barren of cash.
And the neighborly people who passed that way
Still only continued to nod and say,

"How are you, Uncle Billy?" or, "How are you, McKay?"

Year after year, as Sunday came 'round,
Billy and his family were always found

At the little old church on the hill.
The people would talk and laugh outside,
But to him this privilege was mostly denied,
For when once or twice to be friendly he tried

He learned it was best to keep still.
Sometimes the members who happened his way
Would coldly shake his hand and say,

"How are you, Uncle Billy?" or, "How are you, McKay?"

His hopes it seemed were as barren of yields
As the grain he sowed in his rocky fields,

But he was never known to despair.
He'd often remark: "I suppose I was born
To pull the weeds that choke the corn,
But I guess when Gabriel blows his horn

You will find old Billy there!"
And all who happened to pass that way,
As for years, would merely nod and say,
"How are you, Uncle Billy?" or, "How are you, McKay?"

As years rolled by—as years will roll—
Some strangers came in hunting for coal;

At least, that's what they said.

But old Uncle Billy, resting from toil,
Sat watching his spring bubble and boil,
Remarked, "Those fellows are hunting for oil;

It acts that way I have read."

And one of the strangers who happened that way
Shook his hand and most earnestly did say,
"A pleasure; a real pleasure to meet you, Mr. McKay."

Uncle Billy most cordially shook his hand,
But gave no option for the sale of his land,

Neither signed he any iron-clad lease.

They figured how it would be to his gain,
And their figures seemed most reasonably plain;
But all their entreaties and pleadings were vain,

Though they gave him few moments of peace.

And now the people who passed that way
Would respectfully bow and pleasantly say,
"How are you, Uncle Billy; how are you, Mr. McKay?"

At last the agreement the old man signed,
Had all of his rights most clearly defined,

With his share in the profits not small.

Then boilers and derricks covered the soil,
And tanks gathered in car loads of oil,
While the royalty gathered was exceedingly royal,

And ladies came in buggies to call.

And now the people who happened that way
Would most cordially shake his hand and say,
"How are you, Captain; how are you, Captain McKay?"

Now as he climbed to the church on the hill,
He'd see the same members standing round still,

Who showed what money is worth;
For now around him they'd jostle and crowd,
Glad if a shake of his hand was allowed,
And if he made a remark they laughed aloud;

Yet *he* thought more of the earth.
And now each time that he went that way,
The brethren would shake his hand and say
"How are you, Brother Billy; how are you, Brother
McKay?"

Uncle Billy lives at the same old place,
But now seems born of a different race,

For he is a man of great repute;
He's elder, now, in the church on the hill,
And the country store never sends in a bill;
And where he lives in the old house still,

The neighbors say is *so* rustic and cute.
And now the hundreds who pass that way
Stop, earnestly shake his hand and say,
"How are you, Colonel; how are you, Colonel McKay?"

FOOT-PRINTS.

HAPPY, yes, happy is the man who can say,
As he looks down the vale of the past,
Flowers I planted now bloom by the way,
Where seeds of discord often were cast.

Happy is he, as he measures each mile,
Or figures the years, day after day,
To know that often he planted a smile
That drove the shadows of sorrow away.

Happy, yes, happy to know that his hand
Lifted the drowning above the waves' roar;
That his steps are measured deep in the sand
With those he led safely back to the shore.

Happy, yes, happy to know that his light
Has been to the skeptic drifting around,
A beacon to him thro' the blackest of night
That guided him back to the solid ground.

THE LAND AGENT'S LAMENT.

DAY by day, the same old story:
Fret and worry, fret and fume;
Living in the waning glory
Of a badly busted boom.

Lamp of hope burns like a taper,
And the tongue is almost dumb;
For the roads we built on paper
Have, it seems, all failed to come.

And our factories, too, are lacking —
All, it seems, gone up in smoke;
For the men who furnished backing
Like ourselves, are badly broke.

There seems nothing in the air
That inspires our old ambitions;
For the future seems as bare
As the lots in our additions.

All the land so nicely platted,
Lots all sold (in our mind),
With weeds is now so badly matted,
Even stakes are hard to find.

And the wooden walks we planted
In the mud, from boomish habits,
Are twisted, like the options granted,
And furnish homes for timid rabbits.

Maple trees, in summer raiments,
For one season stood as guide;
Then, like notes for second payments,
On our hands slowly died.

All the hopes so happ'ly painted
Which we spoke about before,
Like the "tenderfoot," have fainted,
Or vamoosed our sanctum door.

Now a string of foolish boomers,
Longer than the longest steeple,
Are loaded in prairie schooners,
Going back to find their people.

HOPE.

A GERM of life in every death
Gives us hope beyond the tomb,
Like a ray of golden sunshine
Piercing through the winter gloom.

HOME.

THEY tell me of a southern home,
Where snow flakes never fly;
A mildly tempered southern zone,
Of balmy air and sunny sky.

No howling wind or sweeping gale
E'er sing their stormy tune,
But all the year, o'er hill and vale,
The flowers bloom like May and June.

But still I love the welcome sound
Of howling wind and pelting sleet;
I love to see the forests bound
In winter's winding sheet.

To see the ice on bending trees
Shine out in silver gleam;
To catch a whiff of Arctic breeze
That binds the running stream.

To see the snow flakes crinkling down;
To hear the tinkling bell,
Past the farm and through the town,
Its song of winter tell.

So I my lot and home will cast
Where storms of winter cling,
And when the snows and storms are past,
I'll better love the spring.

MISLED.

IN the Christian man how oft we find,
As for the Lord he tries to plead,
That all his arguments inclined
Towards showing up his creed.

He builds around poor doubting man
A wall of doctrines broad and high;
The base of all are but *his* plan
O'er which the sinner's faith must fly.

Too many bridges first to build,
Too many streams first to cross;
With doubt the pilgrim's mind is filled,
And how to start he's at a loss.

His sins like barriers block the road,
For Creed alone to him is given;
And oft he falls beneath the load,
And never finds his way to heaven.

JUST HOLLYHOCKS.

I HEAR them talkin' of flowers
Like verbenys an' sweet smellin' pink,
And many with names so curious—
I try to look wise and think,
For I never was much on botany—
Fault o' my teachin' I often suppose;
Yet I hardly evèr fail on a piney,
And don't often miss on the rose.
It may be the fault o' my raisin',
Or the lack of book larnin' sense,
That makes me love the hollyhocks
That stood by the old garden fence.

I know the name isn't high-toned,
Just as plain as it well could be,
But to see them so honestly bloomin'
Was always kind o' good to see.
They just stood off in a corner,
No one ever gave 'em much praise,
And Natur' forgot to make handles
So the flowers would fit bo-kays.
They needed no potting or petting —
The ground was their only expense;
Still I often get hungry to see
The bunch by the old garden fence.

Sometimes they'd come red an' single,
And sometimes yellow and double,
But they always came round in season
And asked for no hoeing or trouble.
Of course, we had tulips and pansies
Way back at the old, old home,
But the hollyhock was most independent,
Just standin' there, bloomin' alone.
You can lay it up to my raisin'
Or the lack of book larnin' sense,
But, oh! how I'd like to see them,
Back home by the old garden fence.

GOOD TO DO.

THE good to do is never done
While there's a soul to save;
The race of life is never run
While there's an unfilled grave.

The chance to win is never won
While there's a wrong to right;
The sun that shines is not a sun
When shedding forth no golden light.

THE ECONOMIC MAN.

THERE'S no new fangled notions 'bout my house an' barn,
One is built for comfort, 'tother for hay and corn;
Of course, when we were buildin', there wa'n't any "Queen Anne"—
We just hewed out an' raised 'em on the good old fashioned plan;
The doors are rather large, an' winder panes rather small,
An' a place to hang hats an' caps in a great big roomy hall.
We've got no wide verandys, an' sich new fangled gear,
Just a great big porch in front and same along the rear;
I built 'em all myself, with help of a carpenter friend,
And two big outside chimleys, one at either end,
The bottoms made of rock, with tops tipped out with brick,
And fireplaces in each room that take a six-foot stick.
I don't believe in paintin', only just enough to prime;
Don't like yer fancy colors, none o' that in mine;
Nor shiny locks an' hinges, a-spillin' of the door,
Nor fancy colored carpets, to kiver up the floor;
Nor orgins or peanners a-squeakin' through the room,
A-keepin' uv my wimmin from workin' of the loom.
No, sir! I'm what is termed an economic man;
My rules an' regelations the good old fashioned plan

I don't believe in silks an' satins an' spendin' of my means
For fancy hats an' feathers an' nickeled plated sewin'
machines;

And such other silly fixin's some wimmin try to use;
An' when mine up and wants 'em, I just up an' refuse.
I need my money, for the grass a-gittin' green,
Now reminds me that I must have a new machine;
And this, with such awful taxes, an' many other things,
Just knocks yer silks an' satins an' fancy hats an' wings.
I've bought my wimmin calico, an' boys, jeans by the yard,
And yet, 'cordin' to my neighbors, I'm stingy, mean an'
hard;

In *my* way to do my duty, I know I've allus tried,
And yet my family, like others, aint never satisfied.
My boy Jim got mad an' left 'fore he was seventeen,
And now around the place he's hardly ever seen;
And Joe, an' Bob, an' Bill, *they* also went away
Just when I needed uv 'em to help me in my hay.
And my girls, they, too, have left and gone up to the town,
An', if it wa'n't for their mother, would hardly care come
down,

For she is rather feeble, bein' never very strong,
An' they try to help a little in movin' her work along,
For I can't hire help to keep *her* work a-goin',
As *I* must have the help through harvest an' my mowin';
Then people can keep well, if they will only choose,
An' not be wearin' calfskin instead of cowhide shoes.
What this world's a-comin' tew I'd really like to know
When wimmin folks must have machines to even wash
an' sew,

And wearin' fancy store goods, with sleeves as big as sacks,
Instead of, as we used to, homespun wool and flax;
An' boys a-wastin' uv their time with dollar balls and bats,
And some want calfskin shoes an' even silk cravats;
I've got some foolish neighbors who do these things I own,
An' keep their children 'bout 'em till every one is grown,
But *I* am what is termed an economic man:
My rules an' regelations, the good old fashioned plan.

THE BIBLE.

THE man who would with God commune
Must read his Bible through and through;
It helps to keep his soul in tune,
And melts his heart like morning dew.

That grand old book the mind expands
Until it seems on angel wings,
Our thoughts are borne to better lands,
Where love and joy eternal spring.

It lifts our sinful thoughts above
The groveling earth to sunny skies,
And sings to us its songs of love
Like chimes from Paradise.

LONGING.

STORE the mind from books and creeds,
And yet the soul still intercedes;
A longing, unfulfilled desire
For something grander, something higher,
Tho' earthly hopes may reach their goal;
Still unsatisfied the soul;
A longing, longing undefined,
A glimmer in the human mind
That this is not finality;
A hope of immortality.

An educated love will cling
To many joys our wealth may bring;
But false the hope; nay, call it blest,
That seems to lull the *soul* to rest.
The living soul, still anxious, reaches
For more than book or reason teaches;
And though at times I darkly grope,
Still I love this living hope:
A gleam of immortality
That's not an ideality.

Sometimes, almost like a dream,
I faintly catch a golden gleam
That seems to satisfy the soul,
Though 'cross it quick the shadows roll;
But it's enough, with faith entwining,
To show me that the sun is shining.
O, let me in this world of strife
Live in that sunshine all my life;
More than hope of immortality;
A blessed live reality.

POETRY.

POETRY is not simply rhythm and rhyme—
It must reach in chords sublime
The depths of human soul,
And o'er the heart in cadence roll
 Like chimes from Paradise;
The best impulses of the heart
Should quick respond to every part,
And every word and every line
Should bear the sentiment of rhyme
 That in the soul never dies.

THE SHOEMAKER.

THE shoemaker sat on his bench of leather
Pegging away on a half-worn shoe;
Whatever the times or state of the weather,
He pegged away, the whole day through.

Sometimes he'd whistle, sometimes he'd sing;
He cut his patch to fit the hole,
And he always had some one on the "string,"
While hammering down another man's "sole."

Some said his leather was "tan-barked" and old;
Some said his calf was poorly "revealed,"
Others said the shoemaker was only "half-souled,"
Others said he was mighty well "heeled."

Each trade that he made brought him some "boot,"
No happier man could well be born;
Though even the farmer he failed to suit,
He always had a share in his "corn."

Though people at him would "bristle" and "wax,"
And "button-hook" him as he passed,
Still they finally paid the shoemaker's "tacks,"
For he got them down at the "last."

THE OLD HOUSE.

THEY said the house was gettin' old
And way behind the date,
And must be either moved or sold,
And put in somethin' late.
They didn't care to tear it down,
So graded up a track,
And brought a feller out from town
Who moved it further back.

I tell you, Bill, I felt alone ;
It almost broke my heart
To hear the old thing creak an' groan
When first it had to start ;
For I had hewed the timbers out
More'n forty years before,
And now to see it pulled about,
Made my old heart feel sore.

To move and build went 'gainst the grain ;
I begged of them to wait,
But they kind of hinted rather plain
That I could live with Kate.
You don't remember Kate till now ?
She married old 'Lish Hinkin's Dick ;
They have six children and one cow
And rent down on the crick.

So, as it's just a little while,
 (Tho' I don't like their plan,)
I'll try and put up with their style,
 And do the best I can.
I s'pose I'm old an' out of date —
 At least, that's what they say;
But there's no use in buckin' fate:
 I was n't raised their way.

You know I'm livin' now with Jim,
 Who went to school in town;
And a city girl there married him,
 And then they *both* came down,
And said how they would live with me,
 But soon began to hedge and hem,
For things have changed about, you see—
 I'm livin' now with them.

They pulled the old house round the hill —
 I tell you it wasn't light—
And then to see them cut and fill,
 To country people was a sight.
Of workmen they had twenty-three,
 Besides an arkitektual man,
Who spent all day, it seemed to me,
 In hunting through his plan.

For such expense, I see no reason—
 Tho' haven't things just changed about?
We built the old house in one season,
 An' whip-sawed all the lumber out,

And made the doors and all the sash,
And pins we used for nails,
And clapboards didn't cost the cash
Redwood shingles do in bales.

But there's no use in wasting breath —
The house is up and done,
And we are worried most to death,
And always on the run.
First, its word sent out from town,
And then its sweep, wash an' scrub,
And when next day they all come down,
It's huntin' girls and grub.

Jim's name, cut in a silver plate,
Is pasted on the door;
But I can't get it through my pate
Just what the thing is for.
I s'pose it's nothin' else but style,
After which poor fools will chase,
For people round for twenty mile
Know this to be the Watkins place.

One reason, may be, why 'tis done —
At least no other I can see —
It plainly shows to every one
Jim lives here instead of me;
For, ever since I made the deed
That gave the place to Jim
In payment of my lodge an' feed,
My rights seem mighty slim.

Before the time that deed was signed,
 'Twas coddle, pet and praise;
That paper seemed to change their mind,
 For it mostly changed their ways;
For once it seemed they'd nearly die
 If I left them here alone,
But now they do not even try
 To make me feel at home.

They've drove our country friends away;
 Jim's wife says they won't do;
She calls each country man a "jay,"
 And I guess the wimmin, too.
She said 'twould never do to let
 Her own dear city people know
She was running with a country set;
 And so they had to go.

I often laugh at their stylish play
 As round the house I sit,
For Jim he wasn't raised their way
 And finds it hard to fit;
And once when he had humbly tried
 To be somethin' he was not,
He kind of said to me one side:
 "I hate this style like rot!"

I've heard, in fact, 'twas told to me
 By our banker, who came down,
That such foolishness you never see
 Among the better class in town.

He said: "What more can you expect—
And to most of us its funny—
How such fools live on just 'effect,'
With neither sense nor money."

You see, her folks were never rich,
And to work were most too proud;
And so they seemed to make things hitch
By dressin' up a little loud.
I've often heard, and I guess it's so,
Her folks lived pretty slim,
And for my life I'd like to know
How they ever got round Jim.

I reckon they will spend their days
A kind of livin' in disguise,
And always wearin' others' ways
Somewhat above their size;
To Jim I know it's a bitter cup —
I can read it in his face —
For he's had to put, to keep it up,
A mortgage on the place.

Oh, well! I might as well keep still,
And all my notions hide;
But it rather hurts my feelin's, Bill,
To just be pushed one side.
For forty years, thro' rain and shine,
I've toiled each weary day,
And now to feel, when it's all mine,
I've not a word to say.

And often towards the set of sun
I wander round the hill
To where "mother" and I first begun,
And sit on the old door sill;
An' when I look around the place
And think of times that were,
I hunger so to see her face,
And long to go to her.

Often here, when it's noise an' mirth,
I slip away up there,
And build a fire up on the "herth"
And get my old splint chair,
And kind of dream how we would sit,
'Fore Kate and Jim was born,
And how she'd talk an' sew an' knit,
And me a-shellin' corn.

Oh, well! I'll try to not complain —
My life's not long to run;
The past I can't bring back again,
Nor change what has been done.
But when, at last, my name is called,
(Don't think it foolish, Bill.)
I hope in peace I may be hauled
From the old house round the hill.

SPRING-TIME.

THE days are longer growin',
 The jay birds comin' home,
 The sap is up'ards flowin',
 An' sugar-makin's come.

The small boy now is strayin',
 And mighty hard to find,
 For marbles he's bizzy playin'
 With another uv his kind.

The farmer, too, is bizzy
 A-lookin' here an' thence
 Fur last year's stirrin' plow
 'Long the corners of the fence.

The merchant he is rustlin'
 Round every bizness block,
 Makin' a thousan' dollars show
 A ten thousan' dollar stock.

So everybody's happy
 'Bout gittin' long so slick,
 If it wasn't fur the worry
 'Bout the pesky, festive tick.

INDIAN SUMMER.

THE golden leaves of Autumn days
That deck the maple, oak and willow,
In glory o'er the Ozarks blaze
In many a rolling, golden billow.

No hand that paints, save one Divine,
Can change the green to golden yellow;
Nor all the gorgeous hues combine
In rainbow tints so soft and mellow.

Down where the flashing waters leap
Are bright Autumnal shades unfolding,
And 'cross the rocky ridges creep
The billows of the Autumn golden.

The smoky sun's soft slanting rays
Gild dying vine and blazing tree;
O'er the vale an opalescent haze
Rests on an opal-tinted sea.

'Mid fleecy clouds wild geese pursue;
Their course I trace with weary eye,
Where the Osage trails a line of blue
Against the far-off southern sky.

THE SEWING CIRCLE.

SEWING, sewing, busy sewing;
 Hear the scissors rattle, rattle;
 Everybody's tongue agoing —
 Tittle-tattle, tittle-tattle.

Good intentions, glorious cause —
 Willing angels in life's battle;
 Picking out the little flaws —
 Tittle-tattle, tittle-tattle.

Making some poor mother clothes;
 Helping buy the baby's rattle;
 Hitting friends and hitting foes —
 Tittle-tattle, tittle-tattle.

Willing hearts and willing hands:
 Generals all in life's battle;
 Laying bare each other's plans —
 Tittle-tattle, tittle-tattle.

SLEEP.

O H! peaceful sleep, unconscious rest!
How oft the weary brain has blest.
Oh! how often nature, weary, worn,
Has gladly sought thy peaceful bourne!

Oft with weary strife the day's begun,
Which often through the day will run;
Trials and troubles hedge us round—
Still there's rest when thou art found.

The play-worn child, with smiling face,
In gladness seeks thy soft embrace;
And, oh! how age, with conflicts worn,
For blest relief will to thee turn.

'Mid strife we seek the tempting goal
While worldly tempests tear the soul;
But when through mists no haven we see,
Then, blessed sleep, we come to thee.

THE OLD STAGE.

SAM BILLINGS drove the daily stage
From Alum Springs to Morganville;
The road was like a well-read page,
For he knew every stone and fill.

For seven years he drove that road —
One day up and one day down;
And whether light or with a load,
He always went from town to town.

And whether rain or whether shine,
On him you always could depend,
For every day, 'bout half-past nine,
He'd come whistlin' round the bend.

Sam's rig was nothin' very fine,
And he didn't draw much wage,
But every clock along the line
Was set by that old stage.

Sam always looked so kind an' good,
Boys and girls would stop their play,
For it was sort of understood
He'd have something good to say.

When there was anything to fix,
A watch or breast pin, may-be, bent,
Sam always took their little tricks
And never charged a single cent.

'Bout half-way out, along the road,
Lived good old farmer Snow,
Where Sam would often rest his load
And let his tired horses blow.

The farmer had an only child,
About thirteen years of age,
Who would laugh an' most go wild
When she would see the stage.

Sam would bring her little things
Often-times as he came down,
Like dolls, candy or little rings
That he picked up in town.

Then Sam would hoist the little toy,
An' towards the stage she'd run,
For Sam was like a great big boy,
Tho' he was nearly twenty-one.

She'd often be a passenger in play,
And come with cheeks a-glowing;
Sam would get his whip and say,
Now, Susie, where you a-going?

And when she'd ridden 'bout a mile,
Sam would stop the stage;
She'd get out, look up an' smile,
Like girls about her age.

Then she'd take the backward track,
A-singing, off towards home,
While Sam drove off, lookin' back,
Feelin' kind of lonely and alone.

This went on for several years—
Sam loved her as a child.
One day, while fixin' at his gears,
She came up and kind of smiled,

And said: "Sam, can't go along to-day;
Don't you see how big I'm growing?"
Sam seemed dazed, an' could only say,
"Why, Susie! ain't you going?"

"No, Sam," said she; "I cannot go,
Though I like the ride and walk;
But people all around, you know,
Just kind of laugh and talk."

Sam crept back on that old stage,
And started, looking straight ahead;
Years seemed added to his age—
He felt as tho' some one was dead.

He couldn't see what years had done —
They seemed so smoothly go —
To steal the comfort from his run
An' make a woman of Susie Snow.

Next day he wondered how she'd act,
Until he saw her in the door
Laughin', 'fore the stage had slacked,
Like she'd always done before.

He then went jogging off alone,
Feeling better right on down,
And kind of dreamin' 'bout a home
Some day he'd have in town.

That girl was in his every plan —
Kind of showed on every page;
While she just thought of Sam
As the driver of the stage.

Through winter's storm or summer sun
That old stage had to go;
But to Sam 'twas worth a run
To catch a smile from Susie Snow.

In earnest now he drew his pay,
And watched it slowly grow;
And figured on it day by day
Worried, 'cause it came so slow.

It often happened now a clerk
That Sam knew up in town,
On Saturdays would quit his work
And with Sam go riding down.

Sam wondered what he was about,
For every time he stopped at Snow's,
But would say as he got out:
"A friend or relative, I suppose."

And he'd see Susie in the door,
Dressed so sweet, neat an' trim,
Smiling more than e'er before,
And think it all was meant for him.

And so the months went tripping 'long,
How or where one hardly knows,
Till Sam one day thought somethin' wrong —
There was such a crowd at Snow's.

And when he stopped before the gate —
Like he'd done on every run,
His heart felt like a heavy weight
As he looked them over, one by one.

And there was Susie, dressed in white,
Who, laughing, towards him ran,
And said, so kind of gay and light:
"What do you think? I'm married, Sam!"

Poor old Sam ! His hopes of years
Were blasted in a single day ;
Those awful words, ringin' in his ears,
Seemed to eat his heart away.

And then, with happy words and song,
They all climbed in the stage;
And Sam went driving them along,
But his face showed marks of age.

Sam makes his trips, day after day,
Through summer sun and winter's cold;
But people wonder, 'long the way,
What makes him look so old.

THE "PRAIRIE SCHOONER."

THROUGH our town one April afternoon,
A "prairie schooner" wound its western way;
The driver humming to himself a tune,
The children playing on a pile of hay.

The mother, "chillin'," in a blanket wrapped,
Slowly fed as fuel, insidious disease;
While the curtains cracked and flapped
In the cool south-western breeze.

Behind, two yellow dogs, lank and lean,
Dodged the urchins' sticks and stones;
Or along some alley might be seen
Hunting for stray crumbs and bones.

The horses' looks, in silence plead for corn,
But weary plod along with fading hope;
Behind, a brindle cow with broken horn
Slowly followed up a piece of rope.

I watched them slowly wind the hill,
And away as far as I could see;
With no ambition, and scarce no will,
I wondered what the end would be.

That scene in my memory seemed to freeze.
Though years have rolled by one by one,
I see those curtains flapping in the breeze,
Slowly wending towards the setting sun.

MERIT.

MY boy, don't think that late-cut clothes
Will make a saint out of a devil;
This fact is plain, though late to disclose—
That honest merit will find its level.

What counts is just good, earnest work,
And that is the way to view it;
And, when duty calls, don't ever shirk—
Be thankful you are there to do it.

At the bottom stands the ungathered crop,
Who will neither work nor do;
But there is lots of room at the top,
And *that* is the place for you.

TRUST.

O H! Why should I fret and worry my brain
About wealth and all that it brings?
My Father will grow and ripen the grain
And strengthen the gushing springs.

He reddens the fruit and paints the flowers
With a hand by us unseen;
He plants the seed and sends the showers
That carpet the earth in green.

Did he not build for Moses of old
A path across the Red sea,
And guide him o'er by a cloud of gold —
Will he do less for me?

Will not he who broke the band,
That made the host of Israel free,
Not willing lend a helping hand
To lead *me* through life's troubled sea?

He warns the birds of coming snows,
And guides them where the skies
Still tempt the fragrant pink and rose —
A home of birdly paradise.

And he who guides each sweeping wing
To flee the wintry blast
Will guide *my* weary steps and bring
The wanderer home at last.

A POOR BRIDGE.

HE who tries to get to heaven
On the mistakes that others are making,
Will find before he's half-way o'er,
'Tis a serious undertaking.

A bridge that will not stand alone
Will surely ne'er support a load;
It may *appear* a useful thing,
While it merely blocks the road.

THE JOKERS.

JACK DAWSON and his lively wife
Were sort of funny folks,
For while they mostly lived in strife,
They turned their troubles into jokes.

She hit him hard, the other day,
And downed him with the poker.
But Jack would only laugh and say:
"Melindy is an awful joker!"

One day he took the butcher knife
And chased her to the cellar;
She said: "Old Jack loves his wife,
And is such a lively feller."

The preacher happened in one night,
And caught them mad as fire;
But when he said it wasn't right,
They asked him to retire.

They said it never was a fact
That they were in a rage;
'Twas nothing but a little act
In preparation for the stage.

So each one ran the family craft
In a way the most provoking;
While the world looked on and laughed
And knew they wasn't joking.

FAITH.

IN the star of faith and hope, there's a guide
That will carry us over mountain and tide;
Though we may fall, still in our sin
This star lights up the goodness within;
Though all we call wealth may suddenly fail,
The golden star Hope never grows pale;
No earthly sorrows its luster can dim —
It's the *real, true happiness* that comes from within.

A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW.

I MUSING, watch the sun go down
 Beyond the fields and busy town,
 And gild the mountain's brow;
 I see it sink in the golden sea,
 And the shadows fall o'er hill and lea,
 And I wonder what this world will be
 A thousand years from now.

The workman marks the sinking sun
 And muses on the wage he's won:
 The farmer leaves his plow.
 Far down the vale the tinkling bells
 To closing day ring parting knells;
 But what shall be, no sign foretells,
 A thousand years from now.

I note around, on every hand,
 The mansions tall and stately stand,
 The giant tree, the sighing bough;
 But he who owns the mansions tall
 Must die; the monarch oak must fall;
 And a misty pall shall rest o'er all
 A thousand years from now.

The baby playing about the door,
The sire whose head is silvered o'er,
 To stern decree must fall.
A little space, and the child is old—
The sire forgotten 'neath earth's mould ;
O'er all the shadows will have rolled
 A thousand years from now.

OLD TOWSER.

I JUST keep thinkin' 'bout old Towser;
He's dead now—run his race—
But still I see his old tail waggin'
And him a-lookin' in my face,
A-beggin' to go a-hunting, for squirrels
An' chipmunks 'long the fence,
And his canine ingenuity
Was 'most like human sense.
We'd often wander round the farm—
He wouldn't leave me for anything;
We'd just kind of go a-saunterin',
May be both holdin' to a string.
Or oft, down by the sheep-hole,
I'd throw things in the crick,
Then how he'd dive, splash an' splatter,
And bring me every stone and stick.
The old fellow just loved the water
So well he couldn't hardly wait;
Then he'd come out, kind of laughin',
As if he'd done somethin' great.
Sometimes I'd go a-visitin'
And stay till almost dark,

An' leave old Towser home a-waitin',
Where he'd sit an' bark an' bark
Till he'd see me a-comin'; then,
Jumpin' and barkin' every breath,
He'd just come a-tearin',
And tickled most to death.
The deepest sorrow then I'd felt
Was when old Towser died,
And still remember how I sat
On a log, and cried, an' cried.
Then, just like a boy, I prayed
A hard an' earnest prayer,
That if dogs ever went to heaven,
I might find old Towser there.
He was always just the same—
Never tryin' or wantin' to offend;
Always happy if I was happy—
The same old true and faithful friend.
Since then I've wandered round a heap,
And seen among the human race
Unselfish men; but none so unselfish
As the look on good old Towser's face.
Often now a lump comes in my throat,
When, lookin' down life's crooked trail,
I see old Towser, kind of laughin'
And a-waggin' of his tail.

OUR NEEDS.

THIS country needs less politix and less pretense;
A few more legislators with some good bizness sense;
A little less of party, for what each party lax
Is givin' us the figgers that show the solemn fax.
A little less anxiety to see a windy speech
An' have the editer remark: "Bill made the eagle screech."
Less work done for party and less for party gain;
Less whoopin' up for Cleveland, McKinley, Mills an' Blaine;
Less howlin' of calamity and hittin' left and right,
A-poundin' banks and bankers 'cause money's gittin' tight,
A-drivin' from the country the very thing we need
To put our wheels in motion or give 'em greater speed.
Less slammin' at the fellers who own the roads and cars;
Less legislatin' intrust — *more leavin' down the bars.*
More temptin' of the nabobs to trade money fur our notes
An' make it cheap by competition, like we do our corn
an' oats.
Less howlin' out at capital an' pawin' at the sky
By fellers who can't make a livin' and will not even try.
Our country needs more men of bizness, workin' 'cordin'
to bus'ness rules,
To do a little legislatin' instead of kranks and fules.

THE TWO RAILWAYS.

I N life we have two railways,
Starting side by side;
The gauge of one seems narrow,
The other very wide.

The trains are always ready —
Take which one you will;
The broad gauge runs the faster,
For the grade is all down hill.

Its trains are always loaded,
And the track is thickly lined
With pleasant looking stations
And wrecks of every kind.

Its patrons all seem happy,
And oft, through joyous song,
The undecided traveler
Concludes to go along.

This road ends in a tunnel
Where danger lights e'er burn;
Those who pass these signals
Can never more return.

The other road is safer —
The engine never swerves;
All stations neat and tidy;
The track is free from curves.

Its trains keep pressing upward,
Past hamlet, field and town;
No stoppage till the station
Known as the Golden Crown.

Sometimes a broad gauge passenger
Concludes his trip in vain,
Leaves his friends, climbs the hill,
And takes the other train.

Or oft a man on the narrow gauge
Concludes this train's too slow,
Climbs down the steep embankment,
And flags the train below.

So in case of indecision,
Or an insufficient will,
Let conscience buy your ticket —
It works the train up hill.

This train may seem much slower,
With a steady grade to climb,
But there are many blessings
At the other end of the line.

So in making your selection
Mark down well the page
That shows the great advantage
In taking the narrow gauge.

THE DEESTRICT SCHOOL.

SUE SPELLAR taught our deestricht school
According to the latest art,
And worked most every thing by rule,
For Sue was most all-fired smart.

In 'rithmetic she'd been clean through
The good old double rule of three,
And knowed most all the tables, too,
For she said them all to me.

You see, I'd went to school myself,
Long before I come out west;
That laid t'other d'rectors on the shelf,
As I alone could make the test.

She'd been all thro' Macguffy's speller,
And 'bout it knew a lot;
For nearly every word I'd tell 'er,
She'd spell as quick as thought.

About geogafy we did not care —
It was mostly read an' spell;
For we didn't care for everywhere
If we knowed Camden county well.

We'd hearn of oshuns for an age,
And seas that in them flow;
But for water? Why, the old Osage
Was enough for us to know.

In grammer — well, I led her on,
But she wasn't worth a cent;
She'd just keep sayin', "Hadn't gone,"
Instead of sayin', "Hadn't went."

Onct she thought my words too keen,
For I read to her the law;
She would keep sayin', "I haven't seen,"
Instead of saying, "I haven't saw."

Course, I did not want to reprimand,
But only show the little elf,
And kind of let her understand
I'd went through school myself.

I tell you she could write — my, oh!
Each letter shaded to a T;
And every line laid in a row
That did you good to see.

She wrote the cutest little rimes —
It didn't worry her a bit;
I'll bet I've thought a thousand times
Of things that girl has writ.

At some I've just laffed and laffed,
And that would make her proud;
But one day she wrote an epitaft,
An' I sniffled right out loud.

And when she seed what I had read,
She said: "Why don't you bawl?"
And kind of snickered as she said,
"That epitaft was on a doll."

I don't know when I've been so mad;
I felt just like a fool;
An' told her then and there she had
To quit that deestrect school.

We patched the matter up, an' Sue
Still boarded round our homes;
But she was careful from then thro'
About her epitaphic pomes.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

WHAT a tiny little boat
O'er the sea of life to float;
Sleeping in the peaceful bay,
Around the golden shadows play.

Ah! the boat is larger growing,
Rocking in the breezes blowing;
And the happy baby boy
At the shadows crows in joy.

Still the little boat is growing,
And the youngster now is rowing
To the spot where he can reach
Flowers growing 'long the beach.

Now we find him older, stronger,
Gliding 'long the beach no longer;
A boy's ambition makes him brave —
He longs to face the stormy wave.

Singing now, close to shore,
Songs of love oft sung before;
His happy heart so sweetly tuned
The very breezes seem perfumed.

Through the breakers now he glides,
Facing waves and wind and tides;
A strong ambition sets the pace
By which he hopes to win the race.

Now the waves are round him clashing
And against his boat are dashing.
Oh! how he longs to see the shore
As round the billows crash and roar.

Now the stormy clouds are lifting —
Into the bay of peace he's drifting;
His oars lie silent by his side —
He's floating with the ebbing tide.

The sunbeams now from golden skies
Glimmer on the shores of paradise;
Sweet peace and rest forevermore —
His boat is stranded on Heaven's shore.

GREATNESS IS GOODNESS.

DOWN along the vale of years
A Lincoln or Grady sometimes appears,
With grandest qualities in man combined,
Kind in heart and great in mind.

So great in mind, so kind in heart,
That dignity bears but little part;
We love him because we understand
Goodness and greatness go hand in hand.

Though mid stars his name be lined,
His love grows deeper for all mankind;
Though with jewels his crown be set,
That he is our friend we never forget.

Counting it all, the heart is the gate,
And only through love can greatness be great;
The greatest of names we have written above
On fame's blazing scroll are written by love.

THE RIVER OF FORGETFULNESS. .

DOWN through the shadowy vale of death
Flows a dark, quiet river known as the Le-the;
There garnered memories of years like a breath
Leave us and sink in the shadows beneath.

Across its dark bosom no sweet-scented breeze
E'er ripples the waters in bright, silver waves;
In its surface are mirrored no green, leafy trees
To brighten past memories in their desolate graves.

Oh! how the millions of pilgrims crossing before
Have prayed, as love's chains seemed closer to bind,
That they might bear to the opposite shore
Memories of dear ones they are leaving behind.

But all went down — passed away with a breath;
Not a kiss was left nor a clasp of the hand;
All swallowed up in this river of death
That flows on the edge of the shadowy land.

But there is a spirit — yes, a spirit divine —
Which, if accepted, is to all of us given;
A spirit bearing witness with yours and mine
That carries our love from earth over to Heaven.

Before in the vale we come to this stream,
Our messages will have passed over and o'er;
And across its dark waters beacons will gleam,
True tokens of love from the shadowy shore.

LOOKING BACK.

I OFTEN watch the boys a-playin',
As boys most always do;
It sort o' sets my mind a-strayin'
When I was a youngster, too.
An' when I kind o' get to thinkin'
It just sets my eyes a-blinkin',
And nearly makes me blue.

I get to thinkin' 'bout the games
We used so often play,
And try to recollect the names
That's almost gone astray;
Yet when I try, I sometimes find
A lot still hidden in my mind —
But some have got away.

And thus I often sit and ponder,
And delve down in the past,
For I cannot help but wonder
Where the boys pulled up at last;
And when I think how we'd play,
I wonder where they are to-day,
And where their lines are cast.

Yes, oft my thoughts will wander back
To feather beds and downy pillow,
And I look for some familiar track
'Neath time's fast-rolling billow,
To find, oh! yes, so often find
The dear old name neatly lined
On marble, 'neath the willow.

FADING FLOWERS.

I WATCH the flowers bud and bloom,
Then slowly fade and die;
Like the friends I love and cherish,
One by one keep passing by—

Passing from the field of action
When the cares of life seem lightest;
Fading, dying, like the flowers,
Oft when hope is blooming brightest.

Every day some faint delusion,
Fostered by the hope it gives,
Withers like the dying flowers
While the fact alone still lives

That every life is part romantic,
That pain in every romance weaves,
Leaving, like the withered flowers,
Nothing but the stalk and leaves.

Every life must have its spring-time,
Like a flower bud and bloom,
While the coming snows of winter
Make a mantle for its tomb.

COMMON SENSE.

IF we could all become imbued
With that good common sense
That makes us say (tho' never rude)
I can't stand the expense;
But just be honest, fair and plain,
Regardless of the style;
It will at last be to our gain
And save us many a trial.

It's right, of course, yes, even wise,
To 'long with others swim,
But does not mean to sacrifice
To every social whim;
Of course, we can't afford to do,
It's only mere pretense
To follow up a pampered few
Who have more style than sense.

When tempted, as we often will,
To make a showy spread,
We better figure on the *bill*,
Before what will be said;

And if we find we cannot stand
The matter of expense,
We ought to have the manly *sand*
To show our common sense.

If any one should show disdain
Because we're doing right,
We have no reason to complain —
Remember right is might;
And as time's revolving wheel
Brings us round and round,
It is a pleasant thing to feel
Ourselves on solid ground.

TO TOWN AND BACK.

I WANDERED round the old worn farm,
And looked at the horses, the cows and barn;
I was out of oats and almost out of hay,
With the sickly corn through clods an' clay
Just a-peepin'; this, an' my fences rottin' down,
Set me to thinkin' 'bout folks in town —
Their big brick houses 'long the shady street
Where often I drove with my market wheat;
With yards mowed down smooth as a floor,
And each fellow's name stuck on the door;
And a fountain of water to keep things green,
And everybody lookin' so neat and clean.
I thought all day an' I thought that night,
An' the more I thought, the less it seemed right
That some should reap while others plow,
As Scriptor says, "by the sweat of his brow."
In the mornin', at breakfast, I could hardly say grace
An' my wife saw shadows crossing my face,
For she knew my feelin's *whatever* they were —
I might deceive others, but couldn't deceive her.
She asked me what was worrying my brain,
An' I up and said — for it's best to be plain —

I've worked an' worked till I've worked myself down —
I'm goin' to sell out and move to town.

"*Move to town!*" says she; "you crazy old fool!

(When she gets riled I always keep cool.)

Sell the farm!" says she; "why, John Jacob Brown,
What in the world will *you* do in town?

Leave the farm where, for so many a year,
We've lived till each spot is sacred and dear?

Why, think of our children, here born and grown,
And think of the neighbors we always have known."

We argued the case all the day long,
Each thinkin', of course, the other was wrong;

But feeling, at last, such pulling unwise,

We finally agreed on a compromise;

That is, to rent the farm, instead of to sell,

An' just try livin' in the city a spell.

So I rented a house on the nice shady street

So often up which I'd taken my wheat,

An' hired a fellow who lived in the town,

To put on the door "John Jacob Brown."

We left the old farm (after sheddin' some tears),

For we'd lived there more'n forty years,

And of the truck we had, I never had dreamed,

For the more we moved, the more it seemed

We'd never get through; we filled the cellar an' barn,

And still left a lot of truck at the farm.

We took our chickens, a horse, two pigs an' some hay,

And had to carry 'em all in the front way,

Which got us into a neighborhood fuss,

For the wind was blowin', makin' a terrible muss.

We finally got through, I'm happy to say,
But I hain't been so tired for many a day;
And as I had been doin' for years before,
I left my old wagon in front of the door;
Some fellow drove over it, breakin' the seat,
An' I was fined five dollars for blockin' the street.
My pigs got out, and when they were found
I had to buy 'em agin' outen the pound.
I just kept still an' tried to look wise,
But my wife was laughin'—I could see from her eyes.
We'd been in town, then, less than one week,
And I was gettin' too mad an' tired to speak.
The next day bein' Sunday, I thought we *could* rest,
And we went to meetin', dressed in our best,
To a great big church, with a steeple so high
It almost seemed to reach to the sky.
Just as we got up the steps to the door
A dandy young fellow flung open the door,
And asked us if we had our own pew—
It made me so mad I didn't know what to do;
I said, "We've just moved into your town,
But I'll make us a pew an' bring it down."
This shut him off, for he said no more
And gave us a seat back close to the door.
For thirty years, year in an' year out,
I've gone to church every Sunday (or thereabout),
But never before, in all my born days,
Had I found a church with such funny ways.
First, everybody'd get up, then everybody'd sit down,
And the preacher, who wore a long, flowin' gown,

Would kind of read a long interlude,
An' the people after him fast as they could;
An' then a big organ, with more'n fifty flues,
Was thumped and banged till we got the blues.
So we kind of slipped out by ourselves alone,
And quietly marched off to our cityfied home
To find our chickens over in a yard near by,
A-scratchin' up flowers and makin' dirt fly;
And there, on Sunday, (it oughten be told !)
I chased them chickens till my dinner was cold.
That Sunday, I tell you, was a lonesome old day,
For neither of us had very much to say;
Each knew what the other was thinkin' about,
And our thoughts kind of lay along the same route,
But it was a subject on which *I* didn't care speak
For we'd been in the city less than one week.
The next day a merchant, whom I believed wealthy,
Though I own he always looked tired an' unhealthy,
Came down to my house to see me alone,
For he said he must really have a small loan;
If I didn't help him he'd go to the wall,
For bills overdue he couldn't meet at all.
He owned one of the nicest houses in town,
His yard like a carpet was always kept down,
With big stone lions in front of his door,
And things just as nice about his big store.
I couldn't help but show my surprise,
For I just looked it right outen my eyes.
"Uncle Jake," says he, "I'll be plain and fair—
Half this city life is a delusion and snare;

These houses, with a gold plate on the door,
Cover many a heart that is weary and sore."
This all made me sigh for the good old home,
So concluded would slip off and drive down alone;
But my wife began at once to prepare,
Sayin' she was just *a-dyin'* for a breath of fresh air.
Without saying a word of where we would go,
"Old Pete" trudged along, just seemin' to know,
Up hill an' down, under the sky so blue,
Till finally the old home hove into view;
And then he whinnered and started to trot,
An' never stopped till he got to his lot,
And we just sat there, lookin' over the place,
While tears run one another down my face;
And on the old porch — it's a fact, I'll be blest! —
If it wasn't the first time I'd had a good rest
Since my wife an' I had failed to agree —
I decided right there 'twas good enough for me.
So I bought back the lease I'd made for a year,
Though the price I paid was a little too dear,
But I said to myself, experience comes high;
I've got to have it an' might as well buy.
I sold what rights I had in the town
And straightway moved all our goods down,
Startin' off again in the same old track,
An' mighty glad were we to both get back.
No longer it seems an old, worn farm;
How *homelike* the good old house an' barn!
And the fences now seem in tolerable shape,
And even the corn is doin' first rate;

And the little old church, where everybody sings,
Beats all your steeples and new-fangled things.
I'll stay on the farm to the end of my race,
And then be buried right near the old place.
It's never too late to learn at some school,
And *I* soon learned that I was an old fool.
Some men were born to live in the town,
But the farm's the place for John Jacob Brown.

LITTLE SINS.

DAY after day I have worried and wondered
How oft our sins the Lord will forgive.
Will little white lies among them be numbered,
And deceits we practice each day that we live?

For the terrible crimes the felon commits,
The law makes provision — the penalty's plain;
But the lies and deceits society permits
As innocent wrongs, don't worry the brain.

The lips we kiss as we meet on the street
With no response from the heart as they press,
Is a little white lie in the form of deceit —
This fact to ourselves we often confess.

The hand we shake, the words that we frame,
As we go answer the knock at the door,
Are often a welcome just merely in name
That cover the feelings of a heart that is sore.

The dudish young man, the coy, innocent maiden,
How oft *they* fail to be truly sincere;
The man and the woman, with many years laden,
How often deceitful, how seldom with fear.

The ending of life, the same as beginning,
Full of deceits, been practiced for ages;
In the sight of our Father *who* thinks it's sinning?
It certainly must be, and what are the wages?

By some other standard shall judgment be meted,
Because wrongs so simple are committed by all?
When our journey is done and life is completed,
All may be lost through sins that seem small.

WORDS.

WHERE, yes, where are the words you have
sown?

Into what, yes, into what have they grown?
Out in the world, bearing their fruits;
Out in the world, adding recruits
To the army of right or the army of wrong,
These busy messengers keep moving along.

In the days and months, yes, years that's past
These words were seeds oft carelessly cast;
Some one knows where they took root,
And some one to-day is gathering the fruit;
But what the result? Oh! how shall we know
Whether for joy or whether for woe?

Sometime—Ah! yes, the day will come
These words will be gathered, one by one;
Some be counted as chaff and cheat,
And some as golden grains of wheat.
Then let us drop them, pure as drops of rain,
To be gathered in as the golden grain.

THE UTOPIAN BANQUET.

[The writer was recently invited to attend a "banquet" given by the "Utopia Club," but being unable to attend on account of a severe case of "dyspepsia," sent the committee the following excuse.]

GO ahead! Have your Utopian banquet,
With a "menu" and speeches profuse,
While *I* am the unfortunate mortal
That's compelled to write an excuse —
I mean, no excuse for the banquet;
It's all that can be desired:
The legitimate excuse I *must* offer
Makes me most distressingly tired.
Webster tells us the word *Utopia*
Means all that is perfect, complete.
Now what is a Utopian banquet
To a dyspeptic who dare not eat?
Is looking at oysters and salads,
Fine candies, costly and rare,
Inclined to make a man happy
If he cannot partake of the fare?
Will celery, cranberries and turkey
Be a very entrancing sight
To a fellow who, with his indigestion,
Will waltz the rest of the night?

He who claims the banquet a Utopia
While he lives on crackers and gruel,
Knocks in the head the old adage,
"Consistency, thou art a jewel."
I'm taking whisky, ipecac and rhubarb,
(The latter in small doses, to be sure,)
But a man just in from Kentucky
Says it will effect a permanent cure.
He said, if you cannot find the powder,
(If this is your unfortunate fate,)
Never let up on the medicine —
Keep taking the whisky straight.

THE TRUE UTOPIA.

In my mind I paint a Utopia
I wish we might in reality behold,
Where ships come laden with spices
To shores that are surfaced with gold.
A land where streams are as crystal,
Watering orchards always in bloom,
Filling the air with the sweetness
Of apple and orange perfume;
Where vines are burdened with clusters
Of the rarest and sweetest of fruit;
By mansions e'er filled with music
Of the dulcimer, harp and flute;
Where birds of beautiful plumage
Will eat and sing from the hand;
Where *love* in all her perfection
Is the queen that governs the land;

A land of hills and of mountains,
Fern-covered rocks and trees ever green
Surrounding flower-decked meadows
That lie in the valleys between,
Down which the velvet-banked brooklets
Wind, from fountains, crystal and cold,
While above, in rainbow hues tinted,
Float clouds with borders of gold.
*A land like this, with no indigestion,
Is the true Utopia, beyond all question.*

LITTLE THINGS.

DON'T hunt up the little things
In life against your neighbor;
Larger trials 'nough trouble brings
Without this extra labor.

A simple word, oft idly spoken,
May make a wound hard to heal;
Kindest hearts are often broken
By little things we should conceal.

We can't always know the reason
Why some people go astray;
We might, in the same position,
Do a great deal worse than they.

Do not trample down a brother,
Poor and lowly though he be;
Do not wait to have *another*
The better part in him to see.

Oft a word in kindness spoken
May show the brighter part of life,
And be to him a lasting token
Of a victory in the strife.

With our pathways all diverging,
We can't all be just the same;
Some move upward, others downward,
Some to fortune, some to fame.

Let us each, while pressing onward,
That the victory we may gain,
Be very careful in the battle
Not to trample on the slain.

BOTH SIDES.

SOMETIMES happy, sometimes sad;
Sometimes sorry, sometimes glad.
Little things we sometimes hear
Rather tend our hearts to cheer,
While other times what people say
Drives all our cheerfulness away.
So thus we're happy or we're sad,
As others' words are good or bad.
Striving on, from day to day,
And guided by what people say,
We only into danger run
While trying thus to please each one.
It's really much the better way
To let some people have their say.
Let them prattle if they will —
It's like the water in the rill,
Moving onward all the time,
Bearing off the *mud* and *slime*.
You may *dam* it if you will,
Mud and slime will be there still.
Let us try to bear in mind
Those who try so hard to find
A flaw, of which they wish to speak,
Themselves have a point that's weak.

How *much* better it would be
If we would only try to see
All that's good instead of bad;
Making others happy instead of sad;
Speaking love instead of hate,
And tending thus to elevate
All that's good within our town,
Instead of trying to pull it down.

THE BLUES.

SOME days that come awaken no song —
Everything goes kind of fussy and wrong;
Nothing will start or end right at all —
Shadows cross where sunbeams should fall.

Even the friends we meet on the street
Don't stop as usual our welcome to greet;
And the more we worry and fret and stew,
The more we find to make us blue.

Our clothes don't fit, and figures won't add;
What's usually a joke makes us mad.
We try to look happy, but it ends in dismay,
And everything just goes the wrong way.

In a case like this, it's hard to tell
What to do to get over the spell;
Of course, it won't do to make a fuss,
For the trouble we know is all with us.

When such spells come, as sometimes will,
It's best to go off and just keep still;
If we *must* be kantankerous and mean,
Better hide out and not be seen.

BILL WILKERSON.

I F you hed knowed Bill Wilkerson
That lived down in ole Virginny,
You'd hev knowed the dog-gonest man
That ever sold a piccaniuny.

Bill usen to have a blacksmith shop
Down by the ole red brury,
Till one o' his inventions finally
Blowed the ole shop all to fury.

The nabors sed ole Bill wuz crazy,
But with 'em I never could agree,
For he wuz the most inventive genus
That ever a man did see.

He wuz allus inventin' somethin',
From a locamotive to a clock alarm;
An' 'bout like most sich fellers,
Didn't do much work or harm.

About the time of the rebellyun,
Bill got out a patent gun;
An' when he'd bring it out to try it,
People in the town would run.

'Twas some kind o' a arrangement
He'd wind up like a clock,
With 'bout half a bushel shells
Poured down in the stock.

It had a gang o' wheels an' pulleys,
An' whenever it wuz wound,
It would then commence a-shootin',
An' goin' round an' round.

'Twas an awful uncertin instrumint,
An' worse than bein' in a battle;
An' when it wounded several people,
An' killed 'bout all the cattle —

The council met an' had a meetin'
('Ceptin' three who'd bin shot),
An' pounded up poor Willum's canyun
Out on a vacant lot.

Then Bill went to workin' on powder
Out o' acids, clay an' pounded rocks;
And down went the price o' property
Round there for twenty blocks.

Bill sed he could make a fortune
If he only hed the means;
'Bout this time his new fangled powder
Blowed his shop to smithereens.

But Bill just went on inventin',
A-walkin' round the street,
An' folks 'd hustle off the siding
Whenever they would meet.

For people sed Bill's inventive genus
Wuz so tarnal keen,
He wuz liable to blow up any minit
By some new-fangled scheme.

Yes, he wuz a curius critter,
An' I'll bet my last half-ginny
He's still inventin', somewhere,
Way down in old Virginny.

A PUZZLER.

WE are taught by Holy Scripture,
In many lessons plain and true,
Always to obey our conscience
In each and everything we do.

Then comes this philosophic question
That worries me both day and night —
That is, can conscience be educated
To believe a wrong is right?

If such a thing is possible —
And many see it in that light —
Then a man may obey his conscience
And do a *wrong* that's *right*.

Or take it, on the other hand,
If truth with this theory goes along,
A man may *disobey* his conscience —
Then doing right, he's doing wrong.

PEACE.

THE fort where once the cannon's boom
Proclaimed the wage of carnage on,
Is now the home where violets bloom,
Proclaim the days of carnage gone.

Where once the battered flags were flying,
As they did at Malvern Hill,
The young Virginia pine is sighing
And the bugle call is still.

High up the strong oak palisade,
The trumpet vine is creeping;
No more is heard the cannonade —
The god of war is sleeping.

Where once within the valley bending,
The martyr to his cause lay bleeding,
The grass and flowers now are blending
And quiet, peaceful herds are feeding.

Where once the frowning ironclad
Its implements of battle bore,
Now ride our ships of peace that add
Our surplus to a foreign shore.

In rifle-pit the rabbits burrow
Where oft the lonesome picket 's lain;
Where screeching shell once plowed a furrow
Now waves the peaceful yeoman's grain.

Where once the wagon train was rumbling,
And shot and shell were sweeping,
The cannon's hushed, the fort is crumbling,
The god of peace his vigils keeping.

THE OSAGE.

WHERE the Osage sweeps the Ozarks
Where the wear of tide and time
Has, with patience never tiring,
Washed along the water line
Little grottoes, yawning caverns,
Or, with fine, artistic hand,
Painted trees, and ferns, and flowers
On the rocks of lime and sand.

Where the cliffs, like mighty castles,
Have, for centuries untold,
Guarded fast the quiet river
While its waters onward rolled;
Nature's battlements, how nobly built,
Not only nobly built but planned,
Showing in their noble grandeur
Something more than human hand.

Far above the sleeping river
Tower the grand old cliffs and hills,
Through whose rocky caves and valleys
Ever sing the sparkling rills;
Where the modest pink and pansy
Bud and blossom, fade and die,
While far above, from rocky crevasse,
The stunted cedars wave and sigh.

Sleep on, thou undisturbed and quiet river !
The children of to-day will see
Many craft upon thy bosom
Bearing burdens toward the sea;
Locks and dams shall stay thy waters;
There the mills will hum and roar,
While the bustling town and city
Break the silence 'long thy shore.

BASE BALL.

HE left the office early—
Not more than half-past two;
His desk was in a hurly-burly—
His work not nearly through.

The others couldn't understand
Why the boss pulled out so soon,
For he was most a steady hand
Through nearly every afternoon.

Some said: "There's a death!"
Others said: "He's sick!"
Then they talked till out of breath
And didn't strike a lick.

Some said: "He's gone to attach
For debt he's 'bout to lose."
Others said: "He got a dispatch —
He seemed to have the blues."

One said: "He'd run away—
He was so much in debt,
For he was running every day
With most too fast a set."

They said: "We've been deluded
In working his affairs."
And quickly they concluded
To take the desks and chairs.

So they quickly went about
To strengthen every doubt,
But just as quickly raised a shout
For *everything* was out.

On his desk a *bill* explained it all:
The rest were flying soon;
It advertised a *game of ball*
That very afternoon.

DICK MCBRIDE.

[The cyclone here mentioned occurred April 1, 1892, in the Walnut Creek Valley, Kansas. It is said that a telegraph operator, who was stationed out on the high prairie, saw the cyclone sweeping up the valley towards a little city, located on his line of road, further up the valley. He hurriedly called up and notified the operator stationed there, who at once gave the alarm. The first to hear the warning was Dick McBride, a "cow-boy," who happened to be standing beside his pony, close to the depot platform. He at once sprang on his pony's back and started to save his family, who were at home, six miles further up the valley; but the storm overtook and killed him within half a mile of home.]

THE slowly gathering evening shade
Was o'er the Walnut's valley laid;
The sultry air, so hushed, so still,
Almost seemed the blood to chill;
The breeze that skims the grassy plain
Now scarcely turned the weather vane;
And banks of clouds, with bands of gold,
Were stranded, lying fold on fold;
The sun behind the hills went down,
And shadows fell on Windsor Town.

The herds, up from where the valley wound,
With quickened step came homeward bound;
The frightened horse, far down the vale,
Came tearing up the beaten trail,
Or on some mound, head erect, expanded breast,
He wheeled to face the glowing west,

And paw the earth, and then in terror flew
As if some demon, hid from view,
Out from those banks of gold,
Up o'er the Walnut's valley rolled.

From off the plain, bending round,
A railroad into Windsor wound.
The operator sat and watched the fire
Dropping from the strings of wire.
There was, to him, no better sign
A storm was raging 'long the line;
When, all at once, a startling click —
His call — he flew to answer quick !
For the broken circuit's trembling stroke
A terror in his heart awoke.

That message from the surcharged wire
Dropped like burning words of fire:
“Save ! Save the people of your town !
A terrible cyclone is sweeping down !”
The first to hear that warning cry
Was Dick McBride, close standing by,
Dressed in corduroy and wide-rimmed hat,
High-heeled boots and red cravat.
He one moment scanned the sky around,
Then, on his mustang's back, with sudden bound
He leaped; and, as he felt the heated breath,
Began his race of life or death.

His mustang seemed to feel the need,
And strained each nerve to greater speed;
To urge him, his rider now no longer strives,
But shouts, "THE CYCLONE! SAVE YOUR
LIVES!"

And through the shadows falling down
That cry rang out through Windsor Town.

Far up the Walnut's valley wide
Was the modest home of Dick McBride;
To warn and save the loved ones there
Was now his all-consuming care.
Out from the city, firm but pale,
He thunders 'long the winding trail;
His mustang's hoofs, with clink and clack,
Resound along the beaten track;
Horse and rider, in the lurid light,
Seem like some phantom of the night.

Through the sultry air, now tinged in green,
Forked lightnings in the west are seen,
And o'er the lurid evening sky
The scattered storm clouds seem to fly.
Far away, a deep, low, rumbling sound is heard
That blanches lips and mocks each word;
And people stand, with bated breath,
Watching and waiting, pale as death —
Yes, watching a storm-cloud settling down,
The storm of death to Windsor Town.

And now the very heavens, in lurid glare,
Seem consuming in flashes of fire,
And that deep, low, rumbling sound
Now seems to shake the earth around.
There ! Look ! Some one in anguish cries,
And then in terror hides his eyes,
For up from the valley, rolling nigher,
Wheels that demon of night and fire,
While its tail of wrath, darting down,
Left a path of sorrow through Windsor Town.

'Way up the valley, thro' shadows weird and wan,
Dick McBride goes thundering on;
The hardened road, where flashes gleam,
He follows round the winding stream,
Or, like a spirit of the gale,
He plunges 'long the "cut-off" trail.
From his lips escape no sigh or moan,
But oft he speaks in soothing tone
To his noble mustang, wet with foam,
Who now has borne him almost home.

Now the lightnings seem to leap upon his back
Around, above, and play along his track,
And in his very eyes they seem to burn,
And on the ground like serpents twist and turn,
And his cheeks of ashy paleness kiss,
And through the air snap, and crack, and hiss.

Still McBride, with sweeping pace,
Heads the cyclone in the race,
But fast his hopes go ebbing down
As he hears it crash through Windsor Town.

Now home and loved ones are just before;
Behind, that whirling monster's awful roar
Of fire and thunder, and sleet and hail,
Lashing the ground with its sweeping tail.
The mustang who so oft had borne
Its rider through hail, and snow, and storm,
Almost home, now fails and, quivering, falls,
While round them gather those stormy walls.
Out from his home, through the gruesome night,
McBride sees shining a beacon light;
A prayer for them, then, with bating breath,
He turns and meets that storm of death.

THE BOASTER.

HE said if *he* belonged to church,
 He'd by the church's rules abide,
But rather than be thus restricted
 He lingered with the "big outside."

When any member seemed to play
 What's termed a worldly freak,
This fellow, 'mong the "big outside,"
 Was always first to speak,

And boast if *he* was in the church,
 He'd be a shining light;
He'd never 'low *his* name enrolled
 Till he could do 'bout right.

While the army, weak and weary,
 Fights its battles year by year,
In the front its adversaries,
 And these boasters in the rear.

REST.

A QUIET, pleasant home-like home
Is worth far more than fame
When the latter means a sacrifice
Of all except a name.

Our friends and loved ones near
Are better far than wealth,
If the latter means a sacrifice
Of modest joys and health.

To have the wealth of a Vanderbilt,
In fame to reach the goal,
With joy can never fill the heart,
Nor satisfy the soul.

For God has planted in every one
A spirit tuned to measure
The purest joys to heart and soul —
They come by neither fame nor treasure.

I watch the mansion, stone by stone,
Through wealth grow grand and tall,
And yet its rooms of lace and gold
May be to some a prison wall.

I see the statesman to the front
 Press forward in the race;
 The goal is reached, and yet how oft
 Thro' wearied heart and furrowed face.

It's grand to see the strong, ambitious,
 Press forward in the strife,
 When it does not mean a sacrifice
 Of heart and home and life.

OUR BABY BOY.

JUST a little grassy mound,
Where the myrtle's softly creeping,
Like our love twining round
Our baby boy that's sleeping.

When the glow of day is dying,
Gently from the golden west
Come the breezes, softly sighing,
O'er our baby boy at rest.

Oh! the blessed love that lingers,
Of that face, those ringlets curly;
Busy hands and restless fingers
Called away from us so early.

But when death is o'er us creeping,
Then *his* death will be *our* joy
In the promised happy meeting,
And no parting from our boy.

VERSAILLES.

WHERE the breezes, soft and mellow,
Float across the grassy plain,
Sweeping down, in waving billow,
To the rolling Ozark chain.

Where the Moreau vale is bending
Like a serpent 'mong the trees,
And orchard, with the forest blending,
With fragrance fill the balmy breeze.

Where the mountain melts to meadow;
Where the plain breaks into hills,
And the maple, oak and willow
Shade the ever-singing rills.

Far off north the plain goes sweeping
Till emerald meets the blue of heaven;
From the south, the woods come creeping
O'er the hills all rocked and riven.

The grand expanse of nature meeting —
The sleeping meadows, mountain vales,
Where the plain to hill comes greeting,
Stands the dear old city of Versailles.

LIFE'S SEA.

SWIFT and strong is the current of time
That bears us 'cross life's sea;
Each soul a mariner; from every clime
We seek one port — eternity.

To some, this sea of life seems wide —
It takes them years to cross;
They float along with the moving tide;
Their barks the billows toss.

There is for them no haven of rest
Where the waters lie serene;
No lighthouse on the headland's crest
Sends forth a guiding gleam.

Thro' faith they see no friendly shore,
But still keep drifting on;
No pilot holds the guiding oar—
Their chart and compass gone.

No lamp of hope to guide the eyes,
They hear but the billows' roar;
The dark, cold clouds of doubt arise
And hide the farther shore.

To others who are floating 'long,
This sea to them seems wide,
But they glide along with joyous song
O'er the bounding, restless tide.

Although the angry billows roar,
They still keep strong and brave;
A gleam from off the farther shore
Breaks cross the bounding wave.

The lamp of hope shines out afar,
Though the sky be overcast;
It is to them the guiding star
That leads to rest at last.

EVOLUTION.

HE struck Mt. Carmel deestricht in an evolutin' way,
And rented of our school-house and lectured there
for pay.

His clothes were cut so nobby, his hair combed down so
slick,

He turned the heads of all the girls that lived on Blosser's
crick.

He wasn't what you'd call a dude — a'most too old in age—

But his hifalutin' manners for a while was all the rage.

The doctrin' of his teachin' was also somethin' new,

For most of us was orthodoxy, bred in us through an'
through.

He had a lot of picters, kind of philosophic scenes,

That knocked the book of Genesis just all to smithereens ;

His picters most was monkeys, and onery lookin' apes,

But he had them there in numbers an' a hundred different
shapes;

Some of 'em was horrid, bein' mostly tails an' feet,

While some were better lookin', in fact, were rather neat

He said these were our fathers in a prehistoric age,

As by his books he could convince us, from nearly every
page.

"This one," said he, a-pointin' with his stick,

"Is probably the progenitor of you on Blosser's crick."

Of course, to please *us* was first thing that he sought,

And pointed to the finest monkey in all the horrid lot,

And for fear there might be some little disaffection
He just right there and then passed round for his collection.
Said he: "'Mong educated people there is now a revolution,
For most of 'em are flockin' to the doctrin' of evolution;"
That the good old Bible story, of course, was rather pretty,
But for those who had believed it, he had the kindest pity.
"Where is your proof?" says he; "no proof must mean
a fable."

Then he looked his wisest and fairly thumped the table.
"But for *my* doctrin'," says he, "I first consult my books,
Then gaze upon my audience and *prove* it by your looks.
Where is your Bible Eden — that grand and lovely place,
The cradle where sprang into existence this noble human
race?

Look around you; look and search on every hand,
And tell me honestly, can you find that Eden land?
If you cannot find a sample of all its sinless glory,
Do you still persist believin' this pretty Bible story?
Now, for my doctrin', look around; your modest homes,
these trees,

Would not our prehistoric fathers delight in such as these?
Wouldn't they have been at home, to run an' romp an' play,
Just as you and your'n are doin' right in here every day?
Now," says he, "I've done my best to make my theme so
plain

That *even here* my proof's sufficient to reach the dullest
brain.

If there's one among my audience who has a word to say
Either for or 'gainst my doctrin', for a moment I'll give
way."

And then down he sat, a-wearin' his very wisest smile,
And silence fell upon the room, but for just a little while,

For up arose old deacon Smith, full of good horse sense :
Says he: "The doctrin' we believe needs no monkeys in
its defense;

Our friend, the professor here, no doubt *his* genealogy
can trace

Back to those picters of his fathers of the prehistoric race;
In fact, to hear his teachin' and look him in the face,
I'm convinced he wouldn't have so very far to trace.

But take the rest of us, who live on Blosser's crick,
To the good old Bible story I think we're bound to stick.
Show me a home," says he, "where love exists on every
hand,

And just as quickly I'll show *you* a sample Eden land ;
And show me he who would refute the good old Bible plan,
And just as quickly I'll show you the Adam in the man."

Says he: "Just one question I would like to ask our teacher
Which really seems to me a most important feature:

If monkeys once was changed to humans, as he says took
place,

Why don't they still keep evolutin' into the human race?
What made 'em ever stop when once they did begin?

The conditions are surely now as good as ever could have
been.

If to this simple question I can get a plain solution,
I will most readily embrace his plan of evolution ;
But if this question can't be answered to evolution's glory,
Then we down here still will stick to the good old Bible
story."

In concluding my evolution story I only wish to state
That down on Blosser's crick they still take the Bible
straight.

OUR LITTLE DOG.

HE is just a common ratter,
Neither very fat or neat,
But would be a good deal fatter
If he had enough to eat.

He isn't very much on rats,
Tho' I think he most caught *one*,
But he's a racer after cats
When the cats will run.

He has rather benchy legs,
And isn't much in a race;
Still he catches all the eggs
Laid about the place.

He catches all the neighbors' chickens
That cannot get away;
Though he's had 'bout forty lickin's,
Keeps right at it every day.

He isn't much on catching
Anything he ought,
But he's death on scratching
In my garden plot.

He isn't worth a farthing
Except to scratch and play;
Yet the children call him darling,
And cry if he's away.

ALONE.

I'VE wandered o'er the hills at home ;
I've wandered, solitary and alone,
O'er the coast range rocky steeps,
Where the wind unceasing sweeps,
Where each stream from melting snows
To the Sacramento flows.

Alone I've tramped the grassy plain
That sweeps from sea to mountain chain ;
Where the sun's somniferous rays
Shed forth an opalescent haze ;
Where earthly green and heaven's blue
Shut all the other world from view.

I've stood where bricks in double files
Stretch along the street for miles ;
And oft, along that crowded street,
I've slowly dragged my weary feet
And felt there, with no friend to own,
More than all the rest — *alone!*

THROWING STONES.

THEY lately moved on Keller street,
Which, of course, was nothing strange,
For nearly every day we meet
Those who wish to make a change;
Their name, too, was just plain Jones,
But they were death on throwing stones.

They hadn't been in town a week
Till they had made a computation,
And out little things began to leak
About certain people's reputation ;
And nearly all around the block,
They'd hit some person with a rock.

It always had been understood —
In fact, 'twas so expressed —
That this particular neighborhood
Was one among the best ;
And no suspicion seemed to lurk
Till this new family got at work.

This and that began to spread ;
In fact, the first stone they threw
Hit the preacher on the head
And slightly grazed a deacon, too ;

Love and harmony had been complete
Till this new family struck the street.

They tried the preacher, had a trial,
Stirred up a sacrilegious war,
And though they smoothed it o'er awhile,
It left a lasting blight and scar ;
There was many a sneering grin and doubt,
Though not a single thing found out.

Then little things about the choir
Were whispered round upon the street ;
This one and that one would inquire
Of each other as they would meet ;
And those who wished to gossip, soon
Had that choir badly out of tune.

The people there still sing and pray,
As week by week goes rolling on,
But love and peace have passed away,
And the church's usefulness is gone ;
'Tis not with love the members meet
Since this new family struck the street.

The people living near this Jones
Have also got to throwing stones,
And, whene'er a person gets a whack,
Of course he goes to throwing back,
Till now the question is to know
Who can hit the hardest blow.

Where fragrant flowers shed their bloom,
Now weeds and briars cast a gloom,
And hate and malice shed a spell
Where trusting love used to dwell ;
And all because this family Jones
Knew the art of throwing stones.

ELECTION.

I F we could only have election
Come 'bout half as often as we do,
The people down in this 'ere section
(Except, of course, a few,)
Would raise more corn and oats,
And not be sellin' of their votes,
And raisin' general thunder.
Of course we 're not a kicker,
But we never will knock under
On the question of election licker,
For a feller will get on a " bend "
When some politician (who's a friend)
Leads him up to freedom's polls ;
And when he there his name enrolls,
He feels (as he begins to rant)
That he's a bigger man than Grant,
And speaks so plain on his position
He stirs up soon the opposition,

And claims so loud that he is right
It's sure to get him in a fight.
You take it, as a general rule,
A drunken man's a drunken fool ;
Men who like to do 'bout right,
On election day will drink and fight.
It's not so much the fact of meeting
As the infernal curse of treating,
For many a fellow thinks the fate
Of himself or candidate
Hangs on setting up the drinks,
While the world laughs and winks,
For he who will accept a bribe
Will do the same from either side,
And many is the happy man
Who catches all the drinks he can.
At night he's filled his patriotic desire
By voting, but his brain's afire.
So after long and deep reflection,
We're convinced a little less election
Would bring things nearer right —
Less voting and less getting tight.

HISTORY.

I N the shores that line the River of Time,
Histories are written day by day;
There we may read in line on line
Of the years that have rolled away.

Those years to some were years so sad
That lingering memory meant but pain ;
To others, those years were years so glad
They longed to live them over again.

On the River of Time the timid and brave
Floated along with the burdened and free ;
Side by side, on its rippling wave,
They floated out to the mystic sea.

Some seemed to gather flowers that lined
The grassy shores on either side ;
And with wreaths and ringlets entwined,
Went singing away on the crystal tide —

While others seemed to gather the cares,
The sorrows, worries and ills of life ;
Instead of flowers they took the tares,
Floating down where the shadows were rife.

Some, shadows on the shores have cast —
 Impressions have left in its rocky face
That we, though many years have passed,
 Still in their shadows themselves can trace.

As we glide down this rippling stream,
 I watch the shadows the shores o'er cast;
And wonder if others will catch a gleam
 Of *us* in the shadows when we have passed

GOOD EVERYWHERE.

OFT shadows o'er the earth like a carpet are spread,
 Darkening the meadows and the orchards in bloom;
And the great black clouds that roll overhead
 Seem to wrap the whole world in somber and gloom.

Though the clouds are so dark and gloomy to me,
 I know that beyond there is a beautiful lining;
And, away in the distance, oft plainly I see
 A spot where the sun in glory is shining.

I stand where the waves come rolling and clashing
 Against the tall cliffs or 'long the pebbly shore,
Or see them 'mong breakers to pieces go dashing,
 Or tremblingly listen to their thunderous roar.

But often in wonderment, after looking a while
O'er the waves and breakers, through the haze I see,
Where the sunlight is falling, a beautiful isle
Quietly sleeping, way out in the turbulent sea.

Oft the briars and weeds so thickly abound
That the field no longer seems worthy the cost;
And we throw it out as unprofitable ground,
And count it the same as so much that is lost.

But oft, mid the briars in the weedy old field,
Where nothing that's good we think can take root,
The loveliest of flowers are blooming concealed,
And the briar is loaded with the sweetest of fruit.

Sometimes there are places where deeds are so dark
It seems no effort to goodness can ever redound;
The hearts seem so hard that not a live spark,
We feel, in the soul of one can ever be found.

But oft the dark soul still mourns in despair
As lingering memory recalls some dear name;
Yes, a spark of love is still lingering there
That can easily be fanned to a bright, glowing flame.

POLITICS.

BILL ADAMS run for office in an open-handed way,
Saying, when he asked for votes, he'd bet 't would
be a rainy day ;
He had no use for politics worked on that humiliating plan ;
Said he : " The thing to do that 's proper, let the office
seek the man."
Of course, Bill kept hintin' about the things that should
be done,
An' if he had the office how the office would be run.
He got to goin' out of nights and standing round the store,
An' talkin' politics with the boys — a thing he never done
before ;
And during hayin' he went a-fishing, down on Oyster Beach,
An', but a short time afterwards, tried to make a speech
Down at Dobbys' school house, where just a little party
wing
Secretly had got together to try and beat the " ring."
Bill told them they were bein' robbed — he saw it every
day,
But, of course, how to avoid it, *he* didn't like to say.
There was one thing, however, within everybody's range,
The fact was plain — it was this : There 'd got to be a
change.
Bill said, just how to make the change, he hadn't any plan,
Only this, we must hang together on some good, honest
man ;

That his part of the county was always foremost in the fight,

And that they now be represented was nothin' more than right.

Bill said he had some neighbors that he was proud to own
Who swore he must have the office — they were for him alone —

But he was rather sort of timid and didn't like to run,
But when it came to votin', he could carry every one:
But it didn't really seem to him he ought to make the race
When there were so many men who hoped to get the place.
But if the party really thought that no one else would do,
Then he'd take the nomination and fight the thing clear through;

That really from his party he 'd never asked a thing,
But the main consideration now was to bust the "Court House ring."

While Bill didn't ask for votes, he hinted out so loud
He made the fact extremely plain to nearly all the crowd;
And so 't was sort of understood that, from on and after date,

Bill Adams would be in the race — a square-out candidate.
Bill tried to look unconscious, as if he didn't care for votes,
But people smiled and whispered round: "Old Adams feels his oats."

And while he was an honest citizen, and 't was so understood,

His pride "riz up their human natur'" to beat him if they could.

While there wasn't much surface indication, there was a strong intention

Among those Bill thought his friends to *down* him in the convention.

The politicians in the party wasn't slow 'bout coming round
And striking Bill for his assessment to keep from bein'
downed ;

Each and all explained to him about a combination
That was getting fast in shape to knock his nomination.
Adams, while an honest man, was very tight and close,
And to him a hundred dollar "'sessment" was a mighty
bitter dose.

He explained to them that it had always been his plan
That, in the right kind of politics, the office sought the
man.

The politicians told him that would do in a "wimen's sewing
bee,"

But 't wouldn't work in modern politics, by a very large
degree ;

They said, if he was conscientious and didn't dare plank
down,

Then they would give the nomination to John Q. Adams
Brown.

Now this Brown and Adams had a "suit," about two
years before,

And, ever since that little episode, each was feeling sore;
And when Adams first came out, it was reported Brown
had said:

"If Bill Adams gets the nomination, it will kill the party
dead."

So when the politicians intimated that they would work
for Brown,

Though it went against the grain, Adams planked the
hundred down,

But what hurt him all the worse and pierced him like a sting,

Was, those who got the money were the center of the "ring."

After that, the "*Clarion Bugle*," which was published in the town,

Said: "It's understood there are two candidates — Mr. Adams and Mr. Brown,"

And intimated somewhat strong — in fact, very plain and keen —

That the organ of the party had better soon be seen.

And when Bill had paid the "*Clarion Bugle*" fifty dollars more,

He said he believed that politics was a most infernal bore,
But, being then right in the race, he couldn't well turn back,
So he buckled on his armor and kept right on the track.

Some told him he was bound to win; others, he would lose;

So that he was either jolly or laid up with the blues.

Many was the fellow who "controlled a certain vote,"

That struck him for a small amount or his name upon a note,

But when he would think of Brown, it strengthened his intention

To just do all he could to win in the convention.

The fatal day at last came round, as such days always will;

When Bill saw the people, his heart almost stood still.

They pulled him round to little rooms or corners of the street,

And gave him, while asking his advice, a splendid chance to treat.

At last, in the convention, when the nominations came in reach,

The name of William Adams was well presented in a handsome little speech ;

But when they went to votin', Bill's hopes went tumblin' down,

For part of those that he had treated voted square for Brown.

And so, clear down the afternoon, they voted o'er and o'er—
Sometimes Bill was feeling good, and sometimes prettysore
But, way 'long in the evening, when the boys began to tire,
One candidate, who had no chance, concluded to retire,
And so, in the next ballot, when counted out and read,
It was found that William Adams was considerably ahead.
And then such wavin' hats an' yellin' was never heard before,

And the Honorable Mr. Adams was called upon the floor.
Now Bill had figured on a speech and read it, day after day,
So, when he got the nomination, he'd know just what to say.

Still he begged to be excused, and said it never had occurred

That he would thus be called upon to say a single word ;
But still he started out, in a mighty flowery tone,
To find, alas ! his flowery speech had taken wings and flown.
He hummed an' hawed, and pawed the air as politicians do,
Knowing, when he'd quit, he'd said just what he oughten to.

The next morning early, almost at break of day,
Bill got a "*Clarion Bugle*" to see what it had to say,

And when he saw the headings, oh! but his pride did raise
To see the eloquent language in the Honorable Adams'
praise,

And many little paragraphs of things that he had said,
That would ring down through centuries, long after he was
dead.

Bill called his children round him, while carefully he read
Every word and sentence; in fact, everything 't was said,
And earnestly he told them, that in the years to come
He hoped *they* 'd bring honor to their country as *he'd*
already done.

A short time after that, the evening of that same day,
A neighbor asked him if he 'd seen what *t'other* paper had
to say,

And when the other article then to him was shown,
He couldn't find a word of utterance — only simply groan.
It had his speech all copied out, every word for word,
And it was the worst conglomeration a person ever heard.
It also spoke about his record before he came out west,
And intimated very strongly it never was the best,
And mentioned incident'ly, as a kind of parting swing,
About a certain hundred dollars he'd paid the "Court
House ring."

Bill was sick, an' awful blue, and as he heaved a sigh,
He said 'tween death an' politics a fellow better die.
He kept right on the track, however, a-fighting in the race,
To the neglect of everything about his home and place,
And won, not as he had figured, on his high-toned moral
plan —

Yes, got elected; but his office meant, to him, a *badly*
busted man.

THE CANDIDATE.

WHO is that man with smiling face
That seems to meet you every place,
And bows so low with winsome grace
He makes you feel first-rate?
Who always seems to have a smile,
His every action free from guile,
Who shakes your hand a little while —
Who but the candidate?

Who leads you round the corner block
And says : " In others take no stock,
For I'm as solid as a rock,"
He whispers in your pate?
Who names to you the blessed lot
Of all the solid ones he's got,
And sweetly intimates *you ought*
To know *he's* a candidate?

Who, rain or shine, is on the street,
So full of candor, no deceit ;
To shake your hand each time you meet,
He doesn't hesitate?
Who never fails to let you know
He's got another man in tow,
And swears it is the final blow
To t'other candidate?

Who meets you as you go to work,
And gives your arm a little jerk,
And winks his eye with knowing smirk
 In kind of way you hate?
Who meets you in the afternoon,
And takes you 'cross to the saloon,
And gets you crazy as a loon —
 Who but the candidate?

SAME MAN AFTER ELECTION.

Who is that man, with stormy face,
That tears along with rapid pace,
And doesn't seem to care an ace
 'Bout anybody's fate?
First he swears and then he sighs,
And in his anguish fairly cries :
“*My friends told me a thousand lies!*”
 'Tis the *busted* candidate.

WEALTH.

WHAT is wealth — for which, months and years,
We sacrifice love, and health, and tears?
In the prime of life we find ourselves old,
That we may fill our pockets with gold.

We hasten our lives, oft failing to find
The roses with which our pathways are lined ;
Our hair grows gray, and furrowed the face,
And weary the feet in this miserly race.

The heart grows heavy and tired the brain,
And all for what? — merely for gain,
Gathering the dollars and acres of land,
And missing the flowers on every hand.

Oft chasing the bird instead of the tune,
Gathering the fruit instead of the bloom ;
We covet the bell instead of its ring —
Hastening winter, we're missing the spring.

What is wealth for which we spend life
In wearisome labor, toil and strife?
Battling and fighting, in the end to find
There's many a green spot on earth behind.

The mansions we build will sink to decay —
Our silver and gold may all fade away;
The trials we've borne have burdened the soul,
And o'er the ambitions shadows have rolled.

The world is wrong. What should be wealth
Is a heart full of love, a body of health,
A soul of joy through no doubtings to grope,
Gathering flowers of earth, full of heavenly hope.

A F F I N I T Y .

SOMETIMES, by some strange affinity,
One seems towards another drawn ;
A something from above — a divinity,
Of which this earth seems but the dawn —

A gleam from heaven, breaking through,
Sweet and pure as morning dew
On our hearts, which neither time nor space,
Nor *death itself*, can e'er efface.

SHIFT YOUR LOAD.

WHEN your feet grow sore and tired
Traveling 'long life's beaten road,
And you're feeling overburdened,
Learn to shift your load.

When weary grown from steady tramping,
And you find a tired brother,
You can make both burdens lighter
Oft by helping one another.

If under debt you are bending,
You must then grow strong and bolder ;
If you find you can't unload it,
Take it on the other shoulder.

If o'ertaken by disaster,
Make a draft upon your will ;
If the draft is promptly honored,
It will pull you up the hill.

If from grief life seems weary,
Don't give up — there's more to gain ;
Keep your mind alive and busy —
Work's a tonic to the brain.

You will find that you are planting
Flowers 'long life's dusty road,
And your burdens will seem lighter
If you learn to shift your load.

THE FOUNTAIN OF GOOD.

GOD has planted — how, not yet understood —
In every human a fountain of good ;
Pure thoughts will widen and deepen its flow
And cause the higher aspirations to grow,
While thoughts impure and laden with sin
Will dry up this fountain springing within.
'Tis the stream of love 'tween God and mankind,
In its purity strengthening body and mind.
God in his goodness and greatness has given
This stream of love 'twixt earth and heaven,
From which we drink, more blessed than wealth,
The soul's inspiration and bodily health.
Thought flowing pure from a pure, healthy brain
Is life-giving food to each intricate vein.
The blood itself from this fountain must drink,
And yet, in our hurry, how little we think
The food we are furnishing body and mind,
Enduring monuments, building mankind.
Within us is planted this spring of relief —
Not merely an antidote to lessen our grief ;
'Tis the well-spring of life by which we control
The ills of the body, the mind and the soul.
If, through white sand, the waters that flow
Are pure, brighter and purer the sands must grow;

But blacken the fountain where the waters spring,
And you blacken the sand, for impurities cling,
And a pure crystal stream is changed to a slough,
Breeding disease and repulsive to view.
'Tis so in life, and no whimsical dream —
The mind is the fountain, the body the stream ;
If the latter we'd aid by strength to endure,
We must keep the former untarnished and pure.

FLOATING.

WHETHER o'er life's bounding tide
In a golden boat I ride,
Or may be, destined e'er to float
In an obscure wooden boat,
God grant, though often tempest tossed
My little craft may ne'er be lost;
That Faith may hold the guiding oar
That leads me to the farther shore;
That there my boat 'mid angel bands
May strand on heaven's golden sands.

OTHER DAYS.

A LONG in the edge of the evenin'
I hear the buzzin' of bees,
Up in the trees that are bloomin';
And I catch a whiff of the breeze
That blows me back to a youngster,
An' before I hardly know,
I'm standin' just where I used to
More'n thirty years ago.

Yes, kind of standin' there waitin',
(Just 'bout this time in May,)
For the singin' school folk to come,
Who'd agreed to come my way.
It hardly seems more than yesterday
When the boys an' girls got down,
And we joined hands an' went singin',
"All the way to London Town."

An' I remember when joining the circle,
In the play called "Gideon's Band,"
How I used to find it most convenient
To hold a certain maiden's hand;
For bein' then just a youngster,
I got most terribly smitten,
Till that very night at singin' school,
She gave me square the mitten.

Yes, mittened me right at the door,
It seemed my heart would freeze ;
And to make it all the worse,
The boys began to tease.
I kind of slunk off by myself,
I remember it just as plain,
How my heart seemed like a stone,
As I went back up the lane.

And that night I laid awake,
And wearied my burning brain
With how I would be a pirate,
And sail the ocean main ;
Or how I'd go to the mountains,
Where wealth in piles was rolled,
And then come back an' taunt her
With my pockets filled with gold.

Yes, come back a-wearin' clothes
The finest a man ever wore,
An' how I'd buy a high headed charger
And ride right by her door,
With my eyes turned in the distance,
But not a word would I say ;
An' how she'd just be a-dyin',
To have me look that way.

But I really did nothing so foolish,
Although a thousan' times worse,
For I just wrote her a letter
Strung out in mechanical verse ;

I showed how she cruelly deceived me
And mentioned the tears I had shed ;
She returned my letters and poetry,
The latter being marked "unread."

BANKS OF GOLD.

A T eventide the sun's last rays
Light up the western sky ablaze,
And the mists are cut and riven
By silver bars across the heaven ;
And silent clouds float o'er the land,
Trimmed and bound with a golden band,
Or stranded, lying fold on fold
Like far-off glittering banks of gold.

A thousand specks spring into sight
And brightly glow in the fading light
Like isles of gold, where angels plume
Their wings for flight beyond the tomb.
Far, far above, and overhead,
The sky is tinged with deeper red,
While in the east the leaden gray
Betokens fast-departing day.

I sit and watch these changing clouds
That seem like nature's burial shrouds,
Floating through the aerial blue,
Watery banks of mist and dew ;
I gaze far as the eye can see,
And yet am lost in mystery —
I long to have the story told
What lies beyond those banks of gold.

No aerial ship has floated o'er
From that far-off mysterious shore ;
No weary traveler e'er returned,
Bringing news of those we've yearned
So oft and oft to see — never a word
Since they left us have we heard.
No wonder, then, we long to view
That land beyond the gold and blue.

All of us have loved ones there.
Are they watching? If so, where?
Missing us as we miss them?
They cannot see with human ken
Else their joys would fade and shiver,
Standing by that silent river,
Where worlds of people crossing o'er,
Not one e'er landed on our shore.

Is it a land like this of ours,
With mountains, streams and shady bowers?
With flowers, trees and grassy slopes,
Where every heart must live on hopes?

I shade my eyes and gaze afar,
And see naught but a twinkling star,
Peeping through the cloud that's riven;
Can it be *that* star is heaven?

Months and years go rolling by,
I watch a clouded or cloudless sky;
The lights of heaven sink to return,
But where is the home of those we mourn?
When shall the veil be upward rolled
And we shall sing those songs of old?
Oh! for a faith that will unfold
What lies beyond those banks of gold.

"BROKE."

BEFORE the fire, the other evening,
Curious fancies kept a-creeping
Through my brain ;
As I listened to the patter
As on the roof they'd break and scatter,
Or in puddles would splash and splatter,
The drops of rain.

Listening to the heavens weeping
Finally put me soundly sleeping,
And I had a dream ;
Dreamed my sins were all forgiven,
Dreamed I'd died and gone to heaven,
And was then with angels living,
Strange as it may seem.

The fragrance sweet from valleys rolled
O'er the city with its streets of gold,
Beneath a rainbow sky ;
Still I didn't feel just right,
And tried to find a little night
That would keep me out of sight—
Couldn't tell just why.

There seemed for me no happy lodging,
 For from others I kept dodging
 In that better land ;
 To meet an angel sent a chill
 Through my body, 'gainst my will,
 For I was 'fraid he 'd have a bill —
 You understand.

But, at last, one whom *I'd known*
 Said, as he led me off alone,
 Don't be afraid !
 For by a great and wise decree
 Everything up here is free —
 Never again a bill you 'll see —
 Everything is paid.

And then in wild ecstatic joy
 I played and gamboled like a boy
 Till angels stood aghast ;
 Free from bills forevermore,
 I'd never been so fixed before —
 I kept shouting o'er and o'er :
 I'm out of debt at last !

But the feeling proved so great,
 Old Morpheus would no longer wait,
 And suddenly I awoke ;
 My dream of happiness was ended,
 Facts again with fancies blended,
 And I quickly apprehended
 How badly I was broke.

DON'T BET AGIN A STRANGER'S HOSS.

WHEN I read about these horses
A-layin' back their ears
An' flyin' round a kite-shaped track
Just like a train of keers,
And everybody hollerin'
Clear round the tarnal track,
It sets my thoughts a-runnin'
A good deal faster back.

I get to thinkin' 'bout a horse
We owned back on the place,
Us boys found out by accident
Was a clipper in a race.
We always had just thought him common,
Good enough to haul a plow,
And when father found us racin',
Oh! but he raised a row.

But at last by due persuasion,
Some ingenuity and care,
He agreed that we could enter
With others at the county fair.
That fixed it; that ole plug just run
Till she looked like a string —
Kind o' made a streak of dust
An' outdistanced everything.

The others said they wasn't racin'—
 In fact, didn't even try —
 An' claimed that by the watchin' crowd
 They could prove an alibi.
 That night we led the ole hoss home,
 Rubbed her down and fed 'er ;
 Father said : "That mare's got blood —
 Go turn her in the medder."

'Twas but a short time after that
 Two fellers buyin' rags
 Drove down in our locality
 With two poor old bony nags ;
 One was so tall, an' long, an' lean,
 Us boys asked, in tauntin' tones,
 About what would be his figgers
 On that ole pile o' bones.

The poor old man who owned the rig
 At once looked *awful* sad,
 An' talked to us so kind an' easy,
 And never once got mad.
 Said he : "That ole pile o' bones
 Wuz once a good deal on the run,
 An' now I'm kind of keepin' uv 'im
 For the good already done."

And I remember how we laughed
 As if our sides would bust,
 And tried to bet his pile o' bones
 Couldn't even raise a dust.

The old man didn't seem to mind,
But said that when he took a notion,
He 'd ride the old hoss round the street
An' kind o' let us see hiz motion.

The next day, as I was ridin' round
On our high-toned clippin' racer,
The old man came ambling up
On his poor old bony pacer.
We got to ridin' where the crowd
Could see us one and all ;
The ole plug would stub an' stumble
Till we 'd think he 'd surely fall.

And when the crowd all got to laughin',
The old man got awful mad,
An' said that while he wasn't rich
He'd bet every cent he had,
That his poor ole pile o' bones
Could beat anything around the place;
And says he, "Yer so fond of laffin',
If you dare, get up a race."

And then the crowd was awful tickled
And said, "Oh, but we've struck a snap,"
An' whispered 'round among themselves,
"It's just like robbing the poor old chap;"
And from then the time was short,
Till all the money in the place
Was covered by that poor old man;
And every one talkin' 'bout the race.

Of course our blooded mare had to run,
And things was settled in a little while;
An' 'twas agreed, as we suggested,
The run should be an even mile.
Then we kind of whispered, 'mong ourselves,
Winked, laughed an' talked in monotones,
A-sayin', it would be a weary mile
For that ole stumblin' pile o' bones.

The day was fixed, the hour was set,
And judges measured off the ground,
And people came to see that race,
For more than twenty miles around.
I was to ride the blooded mare,
And think it's only fair to say,
I never felt so proud, before or since,
As I did that very day.

At last we lined up an' away we went
At the crackin' uv a gun;
The ole hoss kind of goin' stiff legged
An' mine right down to her keenest run;
And every body hollerin' an'
Givin' the ole man advice and warnin'
Sayin', "If you don't get through to-day,
Why, you can finish in the mornin'."

But about this time there was a change;
The ole man kind of set up straight;
The ole pile o' bones just limbered up,
Laid down his ears an' struck another gait;

Stuck out his tail, pushed out his chin,
An' kind of seemed to get unwound;
An' then if you only could have seen
That pile o' bones just kiver ground.

When I was goin' my very best,
I heard a whizz an' saw a streak of dust;
An' then the fellows who had bet
Just set down and cussed an' cussed.
The ole man came a smilin' back,
An' while he put away *our loss*,
He says, "My friends, if you must bet,
Don't bet agin a stranger's hoss."

MEMORY.

OFt when the shadows of evening are falling,
Sweet music on airy waves seems to quiver —
The waves of memory so sweetly recalling,
My home on the dear old beautiful river ;

Recalling the evenings of the long ago
When the boys and girls went boating ;
Oh ! the music still lingers, so soft and low,
As away with the current we went floating.

So sweet the guitar, with voices attuned,
Kept time with the feather-edged oar ;
And the soft summer breeze, so sweetly perfumed,
Drifting us farther away from the shore.

How sweet the voices in times that are olden !
Their chimes and melodies ring in my ears,
And the twilight of evening, shining so golden,
Shines in my heart through all of these years.

Where all was love, so beautifully blended —
Oh ! will those days ever come any more ?
It seems an angel must have descended
And borne them away to a heavenly shore.

SOLID GROUND.

PATHS that seem with roses lined,
Sometimes twist and bend and wind,
Hiding from the traveller's view
The murky, boggy, miry slough,
Hemmed with weed and briar;
And as the flowers 'round him bloom,
Oft the pathway ends too soon;
And when he would his steps retrace,
He cannot totally efface
His footprints in the mire.

A balloon may fly so high
It seems to penetrate the sky;
While he, who on the zephyrs ride,
Looks down in silent gloating pride
On the ordinary mass;
But when the tempests beat him round,
He'd gladly change for solid ground.
Too late; just as his mistake is seen,
He drops into the "soup tureen,"
From confidence in gas.

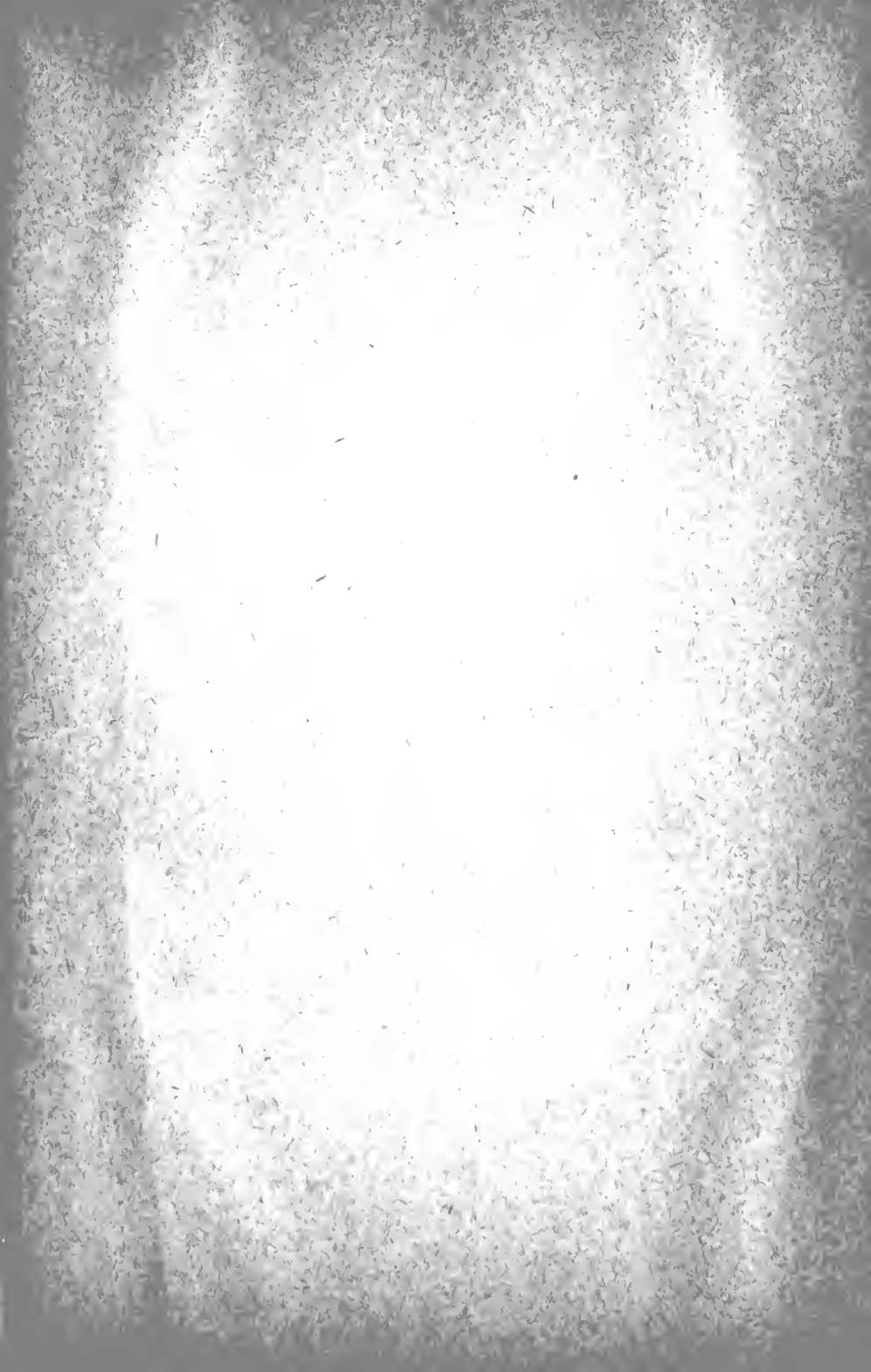
Oft those who feel clear out of sight,
Are very near a place too light,
For whether man is saint or devil,
He's sure to find his common level,

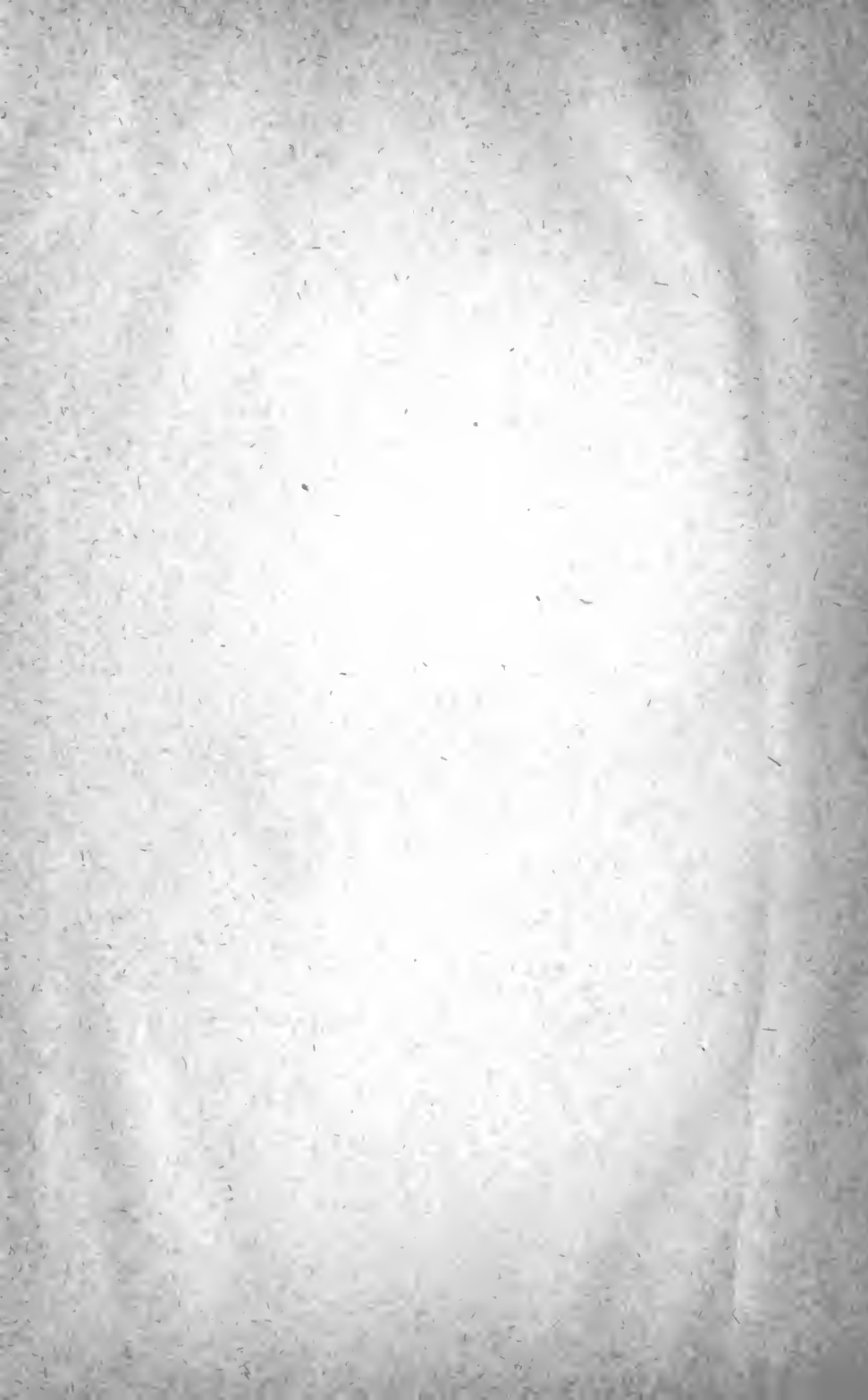
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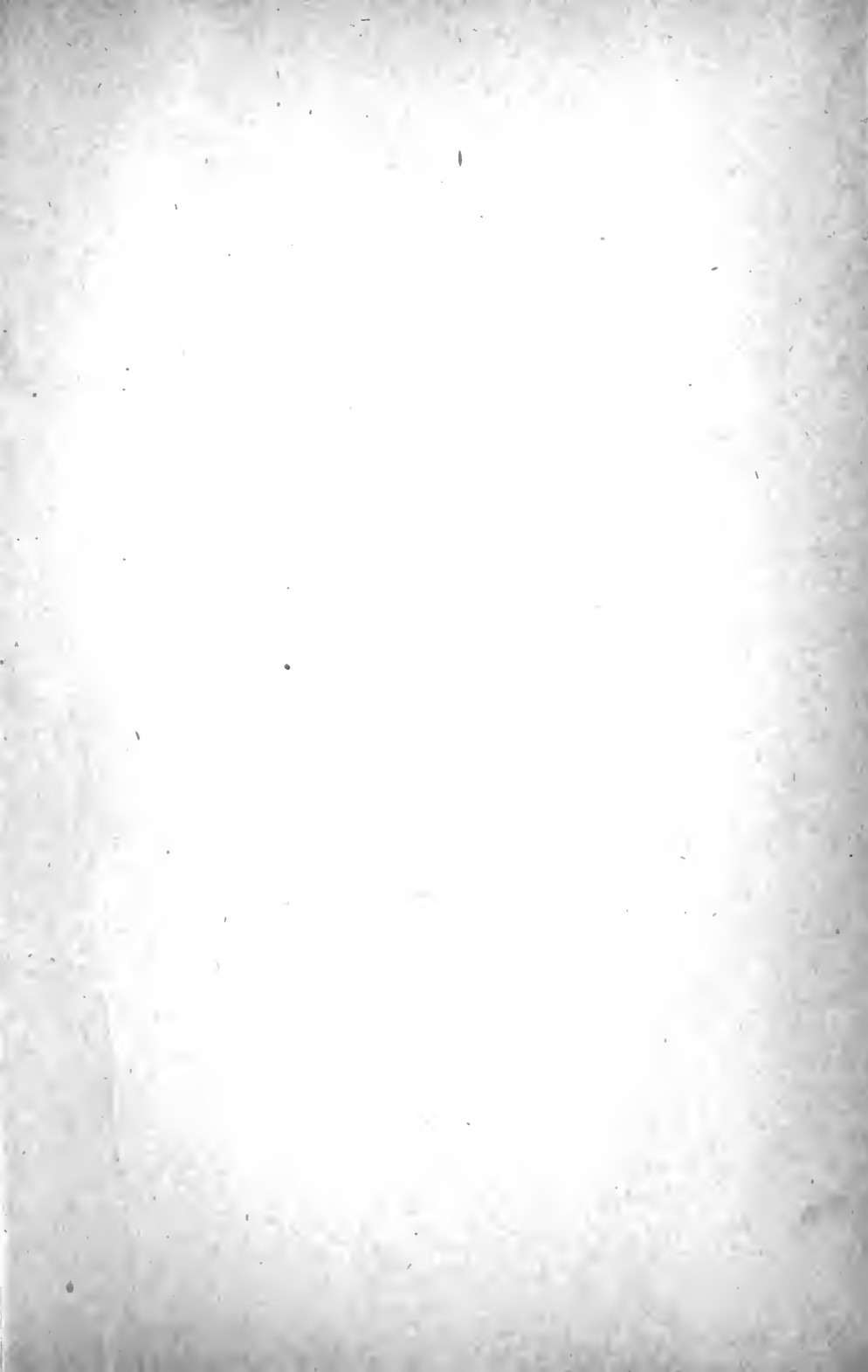
It's safer then in travelling round,
To try and keep on solid ground;
Whatever race we're running in,
We'll be much surer thus to win
 And reach our destination.

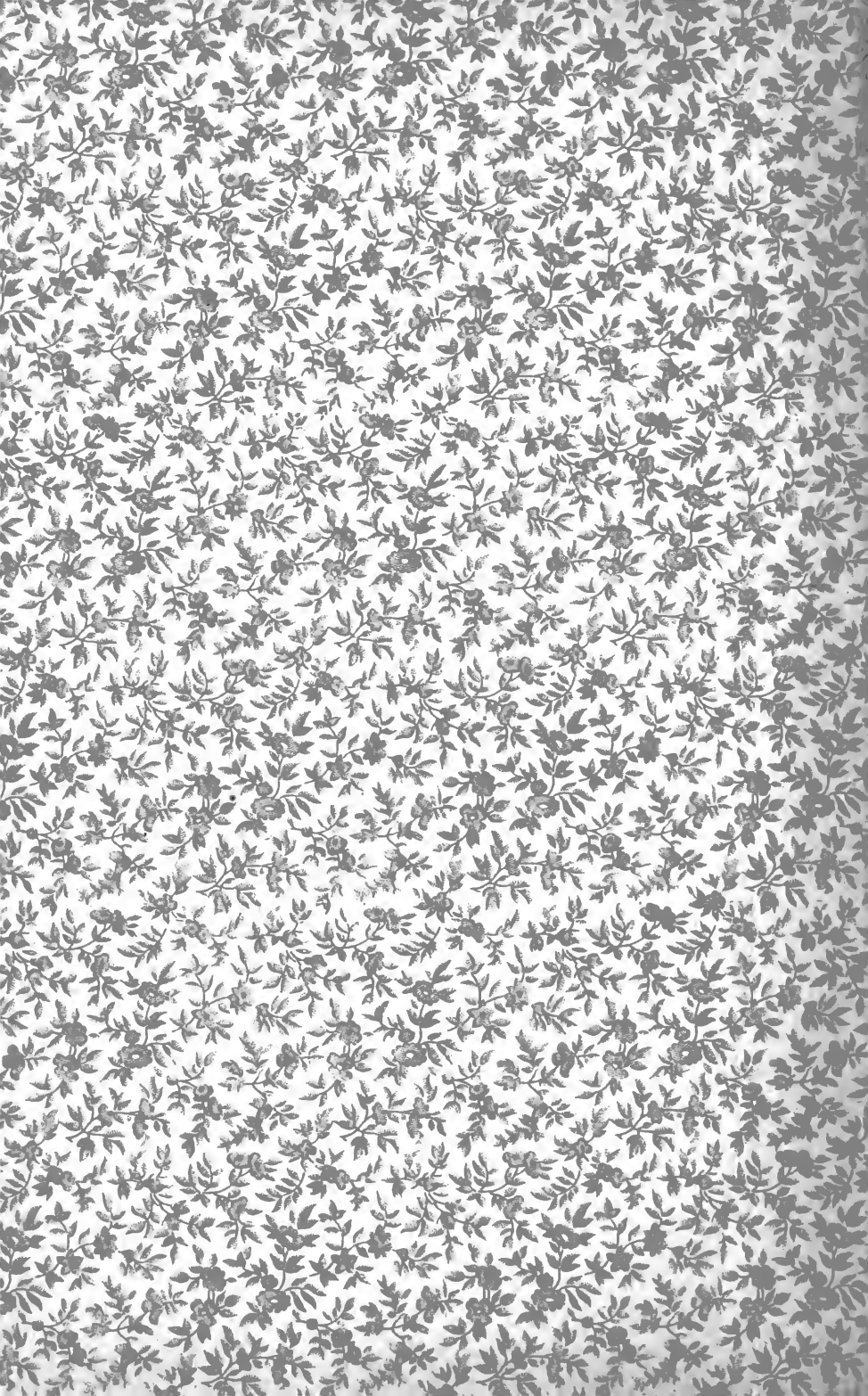
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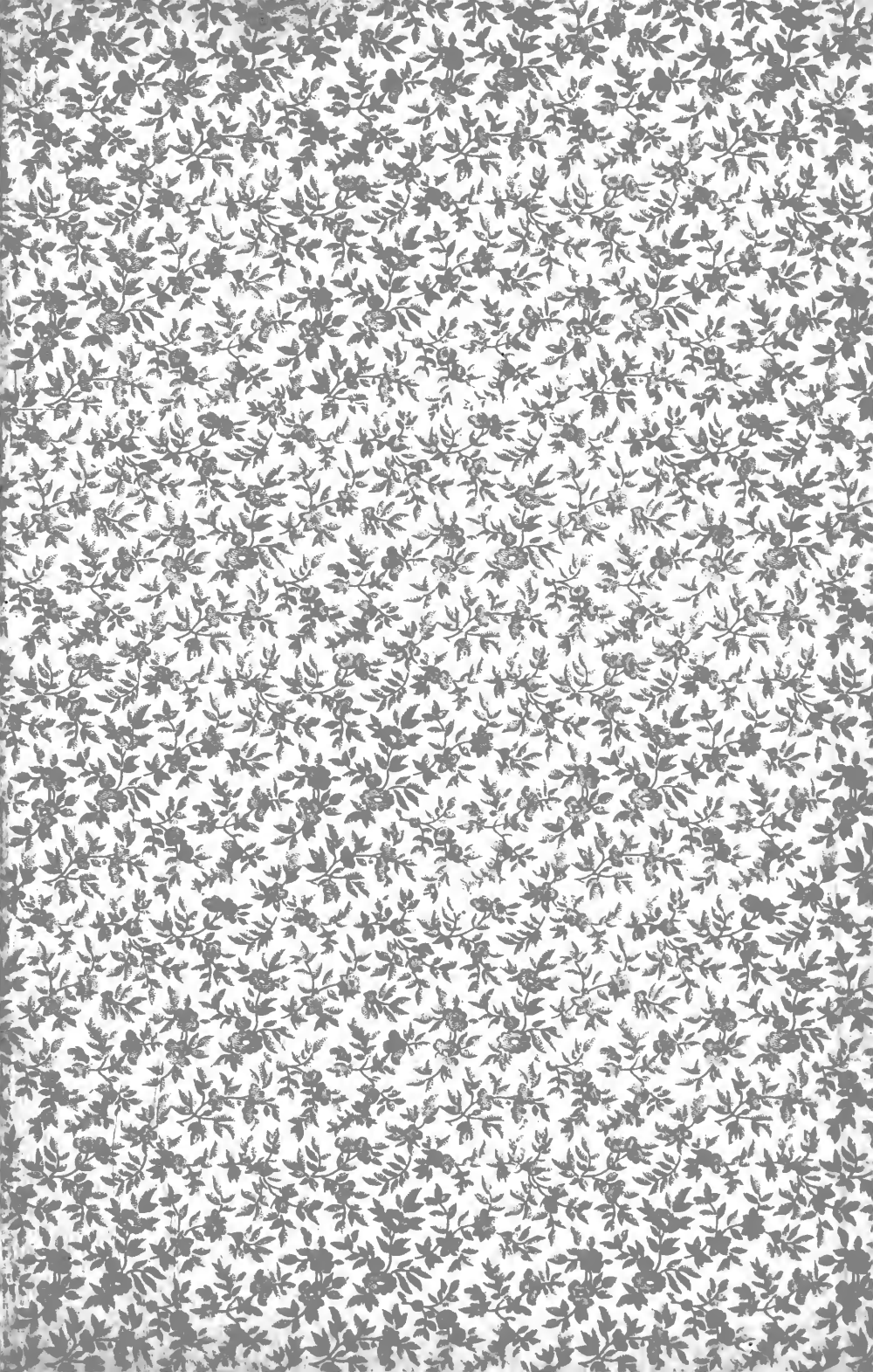
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